



RC/JAE
2 April 2025

Portchester Community School Easter 2025 Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers

As the end of the Spring term approaches and we begin to enjoy the warmer weather, I thought it would be a great opportunity to reflect on a few highlights from this term.

Year 11 close their final Spring term with us preparing for their GCSEs and planning for appropriate Post 16 destinations. Many pupils in Year 11 have secured places for September and we are working tirelessly to support them achieving their best grades to help them move on.

Please see below the planned Easter Revision Timetable. The full GCSE Timetable is now on the school website. Please study this carefully and avoid booking any time away from school that will impact on these exams.

Week 1 beginning 7 April 2025				
Subjects	Dates	Times	Groups needed	Classroom
I Media	7-Apr	10am-2pm	11B – All who have not completed R095 coursework	T4
Drama	7-Apr	12.30pm-15.30pm	Those who haven't finished portfolios	DR2
Spanish	7-Apr	9.30am-12pm	Higher	ML1
Spanish	7-Apr	12pm-1.30pm	Foundation	ML1
Drama	7-Apr	9.30am-12.30pm	All section B	DR2
Engineering	7-Apr	9am-12pm	Invited pupils from 11B	T3/HUB
Science	7-Apr	9am-12pm	Triple scientists	S1
NCFE	7-Apr	9am-1pm	Pupils who are entitled to extra time in the exams and pupils who have missed coursework sessions	IT2
Geography	7-Apr	9am-3pm	Geography revision trip – letters to be provided capped at 16 - JMM	Trip
English	8-Apr	10am-12pm	ALL – go to normal teacher Language Paper 1 and 2 feedback based on PPE misconceptions	English rooms
Drama	8-Apr	12.30pm-15.30pm	Those who haven't finished portfolio	DR2
I Media	8-Apr	12pm-3pm	11C – All who have not completed R095 coursework	T4
Media Studies	9-Apr	10am-1pm	All coursework	ME1
History	9-Apr	10am-1pm	Crime and Punishment	HUB
Music	9-Apr	9am-3pm	Composition/Performance recordings	MU1
Art	10-Apr	10am-1.30pm	11B pupils	T5
Spanish	10-Apr	10am-12.30pm	Speaking exam drop in	ML1
Computer Science	11-Apr	10am-12pm	11D – 2 hours of exam paper & revision support. All pupils from 11D invited	IT1
CRE	11-Apr	10am-12pm	Politics and Participation (Please could pupils come and sign up with Miss Shaw prior to the holidays)	H5

YEAR 11 EASTER REVISION SCHEDULE

Week 2 beginning 14 April 2025				
Subjects	Dates	Times	Groups needed	Classroom
Maths	14-Apr	10am-12pm	Higher and Foundation	Maths rooms
Art	14-Apr	12pm-3pm	11D pupils	T5
French	15-Apr	9.30am-12pm	Higher & Foundation	ML2
History	16-Apr	10am-1pm	Elizabeth I (all)	HUB

Year 11 are also busy making plans for their leavers Prom. This will be held on Friday 4 July 2025 at the Solent Hotel, Whiteley. Tickets are granted subject to regular attendance, positive behaviour, and a proactive approach to preparing for GCSEs.



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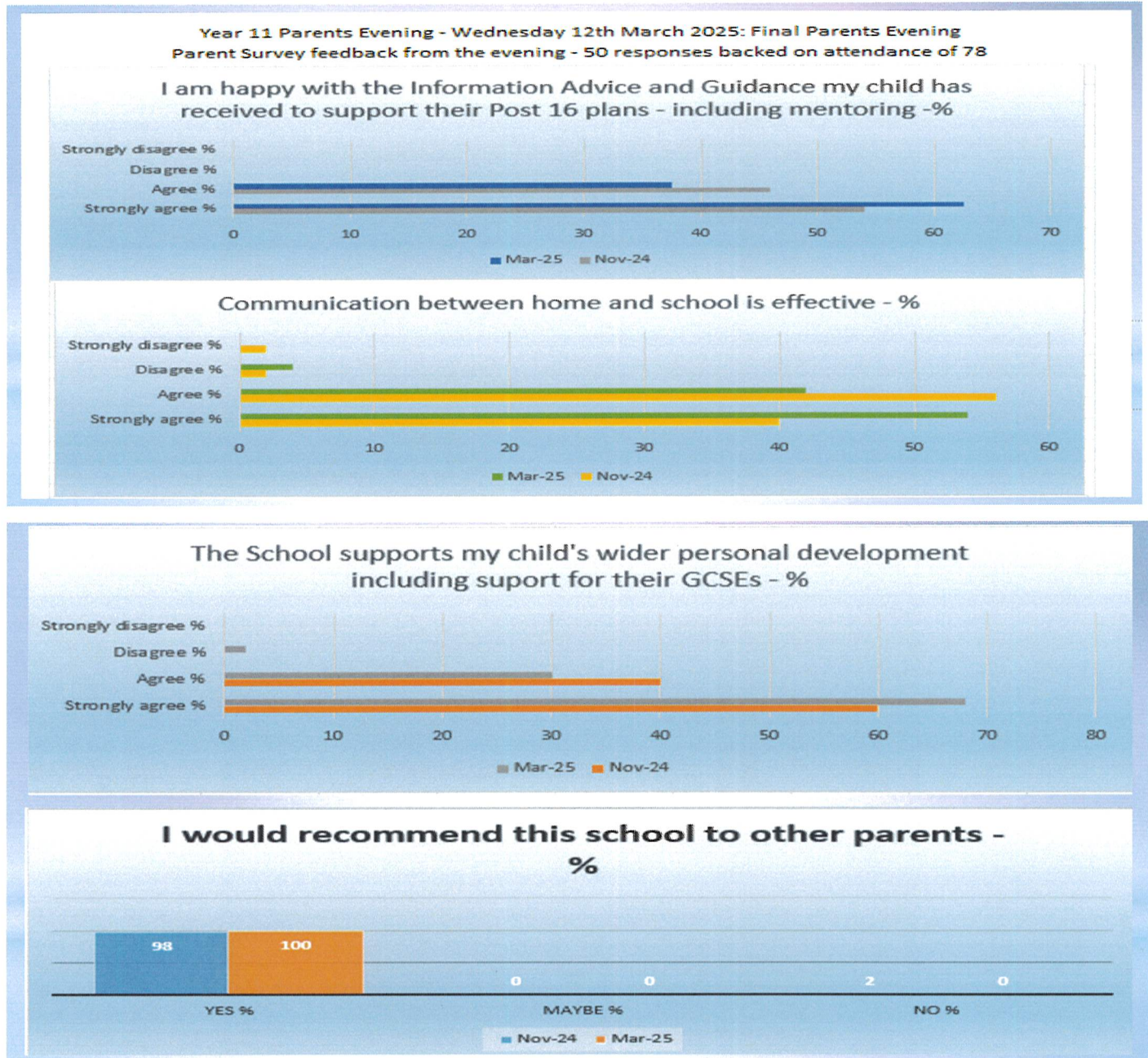
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Year 11 parents attended their final Parents' Evening before results day in August. As you can see from the slide below, there has been an improvement in parents' views regarding support for Post 16 planning, quality of communication, wider support and recommending the school to others.



Year 10 conclude this term out and about in the community completing their work experience programmes. Many thanks to the parents and friends who have kindly opened their doors and welcomed pupils into their place of work. The experience teaches pupils valuable skills about working with others, personal organisation, and pride in making a difference. Once they return, pupils will complete full evaluations to review the lessons learnt from this valuable experience.



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FAREHAM AND WATERLOOVILLE DEBATING COMPETITION 2025



Congratulations to Team Portchester – Darcie and Sienna from Year 9 worked with Mrs Budd to present our debate at the Fareham Schools’ Debating Competition 2025. Portchester were awarded third place – Congratulations!

World Book Day – Thursday 6 March 2025

The day was littered with an array of literacy events. A Gothic Book Treasure Hunt had pupils searching the school site to piece together the name of a Gothic novel.



Our Book and Bake sale raised over £160 for pupils to spend on a trip to Waterstones in Fareham to buy new books and resources for the LRC.

This day also saw the launch of our Young Writers’ Competition – Grim Tales. The winners of this short story competition will be sent for selection to be published in a new anthology by a national publisher – Good luck!

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The Faraday visit to Portsmouth University

During March, a team of Key Stage 3 scientists visited Portsmouth University to work on a project aimed at inspiring young people into the world of science and engineering. The team worked on real life problems, exploring solutions and presenting strategies to be shared with pupils from other schools. Thank you, Miss Hope, for leading this group.



THE FARADAY VISIT TO PORTSMOUTH UNIVERSITY – K HOPE

The pupils had a fantastic and engaging day, working collaboratively to tackle real-world STEM challenges. Throughout the day, they developed key skills such as teamwork, communication, and critical thinking. It was inspiring to see them take on roles, share ideas, and adapt their designs based on testing and feedback. The challenge also gave them a valuable insight into the types of careers available within the fields of science and engineering.

A few sporting highlights from this term. More can be found on the PE X feed @PortchesterPE.

DISTRICT SPORTS SILVER MEDALLISTS 2023/24

Portchester PE Dept @PortchesterPE
Congratulations to the Yr 10 football team - winning a close encounter vs Bridgemarky 1-0.

An excellent team performance saw J.Hardesty score the games only goal.

Special mention to F.Nelson for keeping a clean sheet

Portchester PE Dept @PortchesterPE - 17 Mar
Congratulations to the Yr 9 football team - winners tonight vs Henry Cort.

On a tricky pitch the boys ran out 4-2 winners with goals from:

- L.Port
- L.Tame
- J. Webb

Portchester PE Dept @PortchesterPE - 17 Mar
Well done to the Yr 7 netball team - winning their first ever match for the school!

The team faced Fareham Aca and ran out 17-6 winners.

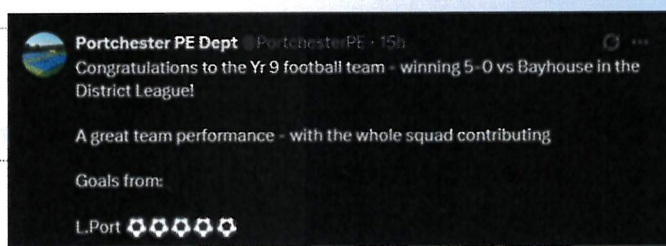
Congratulations to all involved!



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Key dates for Summer Term (First Half)

Wednesday 23 April	Pompey in the Community Winners Trip to Wembley
Sunday 27 April	Goodwood Trip – Green Power
Monday 28 April	GCSE Art exams all day/House Assembly week
Friday 2 May	SMSC session Period 5
Monday 5 May	Bank Holiday
Wednesday 7 May	PTA Meeting – 6.30 pm
Thursday 8 May	VE Day activities – whole school/HPV assembly by Immunisation Team
Friday 16 May	Governors' Finance Meeting
Saturday 17 May	PTA Preloved Uniform Sale/Coffee Morning – 10.00 am – 12.00 noon
Monday 19 May	Year 10/Year 9 Summative Reports go home
Tuesday 20 May	Full Governing Body Meeting
Wednesday 21 May	Year 10 Parents' Evening – 4.00 pm – 7.00 pm
Friday 23 May	Vaccinations/Half Term break starts at 3.10 pm

Wishing you a peaceful Easter break. Term starts again on Tuesday 22 April 2025.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Carlyle
Headteacher



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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ENERGY DRINKS

Energy drinks are highly caffeinated beverages often consumed for a quick energy boost. However, excessive intake can lead to health risks like increased heart rate and sleep disturbances. Statistics underline these products' popularity among young people – many of whom consume them regularly. Here's our expert's advice on addressing the concerns surrounding energy drink consumption in adolescents.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

HIGH CAFFEINE CONTENT

Most energy drinks contain high levels of caffeine: often much more than a typical cup of coffee or fizzy drink. Excessive caffeine consumption can lead to increased heart rate, high blood pressure, anxiety, insomnia, digestive issues and – in extreme cases – even more severe conditions. For children and adolescents, whose bodies are still developing, excessive caffeine intake can be particularly harmful.

INCREASED RISK OF HEART PROBLEMS

The combination of high caffeine levels and the other stimulants found in energy drinks can put extra strain on the cardiovascular system. Potentially, this could lead to irregular heart rhythms, palpitations and increased future risk of heart attack – especially in individuals who have an underlying heart condition.

IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

The significant levels of caffeine and sugar in energy drinks can exacerbate anxiety, nervousness and even – in susceptible individuals – contribute to panic attacks. Additionally, the crash that often follows the initial energy boost can actually make mood swings worse and possibly lead to feelings of depression and irritability.

DISRUPTED SLEEP PATTERNS

Consuming energy drinks, especially during the afternoon or evening, can disrupt normal sleep patterns. The stimulating effects of caffeine can make it difficult for children and young adults to fall asleep – leading to insufficient rest and its associated health risks, including impaired cognitive function, mood disturbances and decreased academic performance.

LINKS TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Some research has suggested a correlation between energy drink consumption and higher rates of alcohol and drug use among young adults. Young people may mix energy drinks with alcohol, mistakenly believing that the energy drinks' stimulant effects will counteract the sedative nature of alcohol. This combination, however, can be dangerous and increase the risk of accidents, injuries and alcohol poisoning.

POTENTIAL FOR DEPENDENCY

Frequent consumption of energy drinks can lead to tolerance – meaning that individuals may need to consume increasing amounts to continue achieving the desired effects. This can potentially lead to dependency and addiction, especially in younger individuals who may be more vulnerable to addictive behaviours.

Advice for Parents & Educators

LIMIT CONSUMPTION

It's wise to educate young people about the potential risks related to energy drinks, emphasising the consequences of excessive caffeine consumption. Encourage healthier alternatives like water, herbal teas or natural fruit juices. You can model healthy behaviours by restricting your own consumption of energy drinks and creating a supportive environment for informed choices.

PROMOTE HEALTHIER HABITS

Schools can help with this issue by including discussions about the possible dangers of energy drink consumption into their health education curriculum. Encourage children and young adults to critically evaluate the marketing messages they see and make informed choices about their health. Teachers could also provide resources and support for children to identify healthier alternatives.

ADVOCATE FOR REGULATION

If this is something you're particularly passionate about, you could work with local health organisations and policymakers to advocate for regulations on energy drink sales to children and young people. Raise awareness among parents, educators and community members about the potential health risks associated with energy drinks and support initiatives promoting healthier options in schools and communities.

SET A POSITIVE EXAMPLE

Adults can model healthy behaviours by visibly choosing alternative beverages instead of energy drinks. Maintain open communication with children and young adults about the reasons for limiting energy drink consumption – underlining the importance of balanced nutrition, adequate hydration and sufficient sleep for overall wellbeing and academic success.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Jason O'Rourke, Headteacher of Washingborough Academy, champions food education and sustainability – and his school holds the Soil Association's prestigious Gold Catering Mark. Jason has spoken about food education at Westminster briefings and overseas. A member of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on School Food, he co-founded TastEd, a sensory food education charity.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: nationalcollege.com/guides/energy-drinks

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about THE DANGERS OF VAPING

Data collected for ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) shows an increase in 11 to 17-year-olds experimenting with vaping: from 7.7% in 2022 to 11.6% in 2023. It's concerning that these age-restricted products are getting into the hands of under 18s as most contain nicotine, which can be detrimental to brain development and cause long-term addiction. Some schools have reported students having their focus in lessons affected by nicotine cravings; vaping in school toilets; and even trying vapes found in their local park. Raising awareness of the risks among young people could help to prevent these problems from escalating and reduce the number of young vapers.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

NICOTINE ADDICTION

Since they were initially developed to help people stop smoking, the vast majority of vape liquids contain nicotine. Not only is this a highly addictive stimulant, but it can also have detrimental effects on brain development in the under-25s. Nicotine can decrease the ability to pay attention, weaken impulse control, affect mood and increase the likelihood of substance addiction as an adult.

WHAT IS VAPING?

Vapes contain a liquid (vape juice/e-liquid) that is heated by a battery and evaporates, creating a chemical vapour which the user inhales. They can be disposable (once the liquid or battery runs out, the vape is thrown away) or rechargeable (the user replaces the liquid and recharges the battery on demand). Most vape liquids contain nicotine and other chemicals.

LACK OF AWARENESS

A proportion of young people tend to view vapes as harmless, mainly because of the products' appearance and the perception (often strengthened on social media) that "vaping is cool" and on trend. In many instances, young people don't fully appreciate the concept of addiction; that is, they aren't adequately aware of the risk of becoming hooked on nicotine before trying a vape.

POTENTIAL TOXICITY

Many vape liquids have been found to contain 'heavy' metals such as lead, tin, nickel and (in some cases) mercury – all of which are toxic. These metals often take the form of tiny shards inside a device's liquid tank, which are then inhaled into the body. Some media reports have suggested these metals are particularly prevalent in illegally imported vapes which don't comply with UK regulations.

UNCLEAR LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

The liquids in vapes also contain solvents, which can create carcinogens at the point of evaporation. Vapes were only introduced into the UK in 2005 – and, because of the relatively short timeframe involved, there is insufficient medical evidence to assess the long-term harms that regular inhalation of these chemical fluids might have on the human body.

ATTRACTIVE PACKAGING

The packaging of many disposable vapes is very appealing to young people, frequently echoing the colours and flavours of the sweets or fizzy drinks they're used to buying. There's a relative lack of regulation around vape marketing, and vaping is often depicted positively on social media – which can lead young people to develop favourable views of vaping and overlook the possible harms.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In the UK alone, around 5 million disposable vapes go to landfill every week. Due to such significant numbers of these products not being recycled, their components – a lithium battery and a chemical liquid – pose a toxic risk to the environment, the ecosystem and wildlife. Vapes are also predominantly made of plastic and metal; materials that, of course, do not naturally decompose.

WIDER HEALTH CONCERNS

Studies are already showing a link between vaping and oral health problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. This is because vaping reduces the amount of saliva in the mouth, while increasing bacteria – resulting in bad breath and a build-up of plaque. There are also concerns that, in some users, vaping could lead to the development of asthma, a persistent cough and breathing difficulties.

UNREGULATED VAPING PRODUCTS

The number of retailers willing to sell vapes to under-18s is a worry, as the chance of these products being unregulated (and therefore containing illegal chemicals and higher levels of nicotine) is high. A related concern is that the mechanisms inside unregulated products are unlikely to have been tested and safety checked – presenting a possible fire risk if the liquid and battery come into contact.

SCARCE INFORMATION

The lack of information about the ingredients and potentially harmful chemicals in a vape is troubling. Some vape fluids (unregulated in the UK) contain traces of nuts, which can cause an allergic reaction or anaphylactic shock. To date, medical warnings aren't required on vape packaging – with only medical disclaimers being found on the websites of the various brands.

VAGUE INGREDIENTS LISTS

Early research has suggested that the chemicals used to produce some strawberry and banana flavour e-liquids can kill cells in the blood vessels and heart. These ingredients aren't identified on the packaging, instead falling under the umbrella term 'natural and artificial flavourings'. Such vague listings mean that consumers aren't aware of the liquid's content so can't identify potential risks.

Meet Our Expert

Run by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Healthy Schools Service (commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council), Catch Your Breath is a school-based project aimed at young people. Its goal is to embed a proactive, coordinated approach among both primary and secondary schools in discouraging smoking and vaping behaviours.



HEALTHY SCHOOLS
CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH

The National College

Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-65809924>



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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SHARING INTIMATE IMAGES

An intimate image depicts sensitive – often sexual – content, and sharing these photos or videos is commonly known as ‘sexting’. As of January 2024, it is a criminal offence to distribute any intimate images shared by a third party without consent, with offenders facing prison time. Naturally, misuse of intimate images can lead to emotional distress and reputational damage.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

Victims of the misuse of intimate images and so-called ‘sexortion’ (blackmail involving sexual material) often experience significant emotional distress. The threat of having these photos or videos shared publicly can lead to anxiety, depression and a sense of helplessness. This emotional turmoil can affect daily life, academic performance and personal relationships.

DAMAGE TO REPUTATION

Intimate images being made public can severely damage a person’s reputation. This can lead to bullying, social ostracisation and long-term impacts on personal and professional relationships. If a blackmailer gets their hands on any intimate images, the fear of reputational damage can also make a victim far more vulnerable to ongoing extortion.

PRIVACY VIOLATIONS

Once intimate images are shared online, it can be difficult to quickly control where they wind up and who else sees them. This loss of privacy can have lifelong repercussions, including identity theft and persistent online harassment.

FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION

Perpetrators of sextortion may demand money from victims under the threat of releasing their intimate images publicly. This can lead to severe financial problems for victims and their families, compounding their emotional and psychological distress.

LEGAL CONSEQUENCES

If a child or young person creates and/or sends intimate images to others – especially adults – this is considered a form of child abuse under UK law. Having to disclose this type of abuse, although necessary, can be harrowing, leading to further trauma. It’s crucial for parents, carers and educators to understand the legal processes and be able to provide proper guidance and support.

TRUST ISSUES

Sharing of intimate images without consent can lead to long-term trust issues. Victims may find it difficult to trust others, impacting future relationships and their ability to form healthy, supportive connections. This erosion of trust can have profound effects on mental health and social wellbeing.

Advice for Parents & Educators

FOSTER A CULTURE OF OPEN COMMUNICATION

It’s vital to encourage open communication with children and young people about the dangers of sharing intimate images. Create a safe space where they feel comfortable discussing their online activities and any concerns they may have without fear of judgement. Be sure to respond to any worrying information with an attitude of support and learning.

EDUCATE CHILDREN ON THE RISKS

Children and young people often want to understand why certain rules are in place. Educate them about the risks of sharing intimate images online, explaining the reasons for monitoring and other security measures. Highlight the potential for misuse, including sextortion, and the long-term consequences that can arise from these actions.

PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Digital literacy is incredibly important for children and young people to understand how to protect their privacy online. Teach them about secure online practices, such as using strong passwords, enabling privacy settings and recognising suspicious behaviour. This empowers them to be proactive in terms of their own safety.

PROVIDE SUPPORT RESOURCES

Ensure that children and young people know where to seek help if they become victims of sextortion or any other online abuse. Help them identify in advance which adults they can turn to and provide them with information about trusted resources like helplines (e.g. Childline) that they can access if they need help.

Meet Our Expert

Gabriella Russo is a safeguarding and neurodiversity consultant with over 30 years’ experience working with children, families and adults in education, local authority and mental health settings in the UK and abroad.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at [what-parents-need-to-know-about-sharing-intimate-images](https://nationalcollege.com/what-parents-need-to-know-about-sharing-intimate-images)