



The Harbour School
Tipner Lane,
Tipner,
Portsmouth,
PO2 8RA

Telephone: 023 9266 5664
e-mail: admin@thsportsmouth.org

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Dear Parents and Carers

Safeguarding Children in the Age of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is now a feature of many of the apps, websites and online tools used by children and young people. While AI brings many benefits, it is increasingly being misused to create fake or manipulated images, including so-called "deepfakes" and sexualised images of children and young people. These images can be created from ordinary photographs and may appear highly realistic.

Following recent national safeguarding guidance and growing concerns about the misuse of AI-generated imagery, we would like to raise awareness of this issue and support families in understanding both the risks and the legal implications associated with these technologies.

Key Message for Parents and Carers

Creating, possessing, sharing or forwarding AI-generated sexualised images of a child **is illegal**. Children and young people do not always understand this and may view such activity as a joke, prank or harmless banter. We ask all families to discuss this issue openly and reinforce the importance of reporting concerns to a trusted adult immediately.

Many children, young people and adults are unaware that creating, possessing, sharing or distributing these images may constitute a criminal offence. Under UK law, child sexual abuse material remains illegal whether it has been created using AI, manipulated from an existing image, or generated entirely by artificial intelligence.

Schools and police forces nationally are reporting increasing numbers of incidents involving AI-generated sexualised images of children and young people. In some cases, young people have created or shared images believing them to be a joke or harmless fun, without understanding the significant emotional harm and legal consequences that can result.

Why this matters?

Even when an image is entirely fabricated, the impact on the child involved can be very real. Children and young people may experience embarrassment, anxiety, distress, damage to friendships and relationships, and reluctance to attend school or

Headteacher: Sian Lacey
Co-Chairs of Local Governing Board: Gemma Gwilliam and Jack Jones

participate online. Victims should never be blamed for images being created, manipulated or shared without their consent.

We ask all parents and carers to help reinforce the following messages:

- Creating, sharing, requesting or forwarding sexualised images of anyone under the age of 18 is never acceptable.
- AI-generated or manipulated sexualised images of children and young people are taken seriously under the law.
- Something being "fake" does not make it harmless.
- If a child receives, creates or is shown an inappropriate image, they should tell a trusted adult immediately.
- If something online causes a child to feel worried, uncomfortable or unsafe, support is available and they should seek help.

How families can help

Open and supportive conversations at home remain one of the most effective ways to keep children safe online. We encourage parents and carers to speak regularly with their children about:

- Respect, privacy and consent when taking and sharing photographs.
- The risks associated with AI image-generation tools and image manipulation apps.
- What to do if they receive an inappropriate image or message.
- How to report concerns and seek support.
- The importance of talking to a trusted adult whenever something online does not feel right.

You may also wish to:

- Review privacy settings on social media accounts.
- Consider carefully who can access images of your child online.
- Discuss image-sharing expectations with family members and friends.
- Revisit conversations about consent as children get older and become more active online.

If your child is affected

If your child tells you that an image has been created, manipulated or shared:

- Stay calm and listen.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Make it clear that they are not to blame.
- Avoid sharing, forwarding or saving any images.
- Keep any relevant information that may help with reporting.
- Contact the school so that we can provide support and take appropriate safeguarding action.
- Where necessary, concerns should also be reported to the police.

Further Information and Support

For further information about AI, online safety, image consent and protecting children online, please visit:

- CEOP Education
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)
- National Crime Agency (NCA)
- Childline

If you have concerns about your child or become aware of any AI-generated or manipulated sexualised imagery involving children or young people, please contact the school immediately. Our safeguarding team will be able to provide advice, support and guidance on the most appropriate next steps.

As a school, we remain committed to educating children about online safety, responsible use of technology and digital citizenship. By working together, we can help ensure that our children remain safe in an increasingly complex digital world.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Sian Lacey
Headteacher

