



# Atlantic Academy Portland

an Aspirations Academy

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21st January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you to all of you for your continued support as we navigate our way through the challenges of Lockdown 2. Our students continue to be a credit to you all, in the way that they have adjusted and re-engaged with our remote learning expectations.

### Remote Learning Strategy and Synchronous 'live lessons'

We have published our Remote Learning Strategy which is a live document that we will review and update when needed and can be found on our [website here](#). As you already know from my previous letter we do not advocate 100% use of synchronous 'live lessons' as a remote learning strategy.

I was really pleased to see that a flexible, blended approach was recommended by OFSTED's Deputy Director, Prof. Muijs, who published a summary of '[What is working well in remote education](#)' based on research and recent OFSTED visits to schools and colleges. In that paper Prof. Muijs clearly states that the assertion that the best way to deliver remote education is always through live lessons is "... [an] unhelpful myth...". One important reason behind Prof. Muijs' findings is because it is difficult to effectively assess student progress and provide students with meaningful feedback in a live lesson.

Secondly, some families with more than one school-aged child find it difficult to access lots of live synchronous lessons due to logistical issues. By not insisting that all lessons should be live synchronous lessons, Atlantic Academy is making things a bit easier for those families by allowing some flexibility on when remote work is completed.

### Online safety

While your child is not at school, they will be spending a lot more time online, whether that is through completing work set by their teachers, communicating with friends, surfing the web, or playing games. With this big shift to working online and less structured time, it is important that we all continue to do all we can to keep them safe online from abuse or harmful material.

I would like to direct your attention to some advice about keeping your child safe online, published by the Government, available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online>

Attached is a link to a leaflet produced by the UK Safer Internet Centre with some useful advice and tips regarding keeping your child safe online. [Safer Internet Information](#). In addition, the following websites linked to below contain a wealth of guidance and support to help you keep your children safe online.

- [Internet matters](#)
- [London Grid for Learning](#)
- [Net-aware](#)
- [NSPCC](#) – guidance for parents about online safety
- [Parent info](#)
- [Thinkuknow](#)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

### Engagement across the school



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Now that we have completed a 2 week cycle of remote learning, we have started to monitor what student engagement looks like across all subjects. We will be looking at 2 year groups each week and will contact home where we have concerns. We have decided that this process needs to be addressed by one member of staff rather than several if there are concerns in more than one subject area and this will also be reflected in the recording on SIMs

### Wednesday-Friday:

1. Tutors call parents of students who have 50% less engagement in two or more subjects
2. Subject leaders / teachers to call parents of students who have 50% less engagement in their subject only (ie completion of every other subject)
3. The Behaviour team will record the non engagement for that monitoring cycle as one notification with a comments box with further details to inform parents in case we can not make contact with you during school hours.

W/B	YEAR GROUPS MONITORED	
18 January	11	9
25 January	10	7
1 February	8	11
8 February	9	10

### Year 11 Assessment

Mrs Migliari is sending a separate letter about the Year 11 assessment which will continue to take place this half term. We will use this remote opportunity to pilot various assessment platforms to inform and support our **PPE 2 window** next half term (**1st - 12th March 2021**) - if we still find ourselves in this current lockdown situation and not back to a full reopening across all year groups.

### Year 10 Assembly

It was lovely to see our Year 10 students on Tuesday for a whole school assembly.

### Year 9 Virtual Choices

- We are just about to begin the Choices process for Year 9 students to plan with us their KS4 curriculum.
- A letter explaining the process and how we will deliver information and guidance around this will be coming out next week, from Ms Board
- We are in the process of creating a web page dedicated to Year 9 Choices with subject overview videos as well as a presentation by myself and Ms Board on the curriculum offer, process and next steps
- **Year 9 Virtual Choices Evening Q&A : Thursday 9th February 2021, from 4:00pm**
- Parents will need to download the **Sims Parent app** to enable the Year 9 choices this year to be selected through this application



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## SIMS Parent App ( if not already downloaded it)

1. On your device **create** and **register your account** at <https://id.sims.co.uk/registration/home/soscode>
  - a. Select the login method you want to sign up with (e.g. Microsoft, Google).
  - b. Enter your **unique invite code** and your **child's date of birth**.
2. From your smartphone or tablet, download the app from the Google Play or Apple App store by searching for **SIMS Parent**.
3. From a PC or Windows phone, login online at [www.sims-parent.co.uk](http://www.sims-parent.co.uk)
4. If you need help logging into the Parent App please contact: [abiddle@atlantic-aspirations.org](mailto:abiddle@atlantic-aspirations.org)
5. **Sign up so far:** Table below shows % of parents who have downloaded the Sims App oper year group



Year	%
Y7	53.3
Y8	54.5
Y9	41.6
Y10	55.6
Y11	51.2

## Year 8 Parents Evening

We really enjoyed our virtual Year 8 Parents meeting on Tuesday and I would like to say thank you for all the positive comments/ feedback the teachers received during this event. It has kept us going!

## Critical Workers - Face to face school provision

Our provision is in place to support any family where parents are critical workers, or for any students who are vulnerable. To provide full and part time In-School learning requires that we follow government Covid guidance, which keeps the school a safe place but limits the number of pupils we can accomodate. The government has now strengthened its message in relation to using this supervision, after fears that the rising number of students attending schools will not support the intention of reducing the spread of Covid and the overall 'Stay at home' message. The government advice now says: **'that parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can'**. This may mean that some students are felt to be old enough to be left at home alone. It could also mean that supervision is only required on the specific days when there is no one else at home. However, at the moment, we are able to manage the current numbers and do not need to make any changes at this time.

We thank all parents/carers for your support since we returned in January and look forward to working with you in combating the virus in our community and nation so that we can welcome your children back into their rightful place in school.

Mrs L Bishop  
Principal of Secondary