



# Atlantic Academy Portland

an Aspirations Academy

Miss Heppell - Principal of Primary  
Mrs Bishop - Principal of Secondary

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24th February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer and Student

After what will have been 8 weeks of remote learning, we are delighted that we will be able to welcome all students back to Atlantic on **Monday 8th March 2021**. We have been working hard to implement plans that will ensure we keep all students, staff and the Portland Community as safe as we can when we open our doors to the wider community. I am writing to share our current plans and thinking in line with government guidelines.

To help facilitate the full and safe return of students, the Department for Education has asked schools to support testing for all students. Specifically they have asked schools to test students three times during the initial weeks of their return. Since the start of term we have been successfully conducting the lateral flow tests (rapid Covid-19 test) on our students and staff who have been attending school. We have a fantastic team who have been doing a great job putting the students and staff taking the tests at ease. This testing will continue to remain a vital part of the Government's plan to suppress this virus in education and childcare settings and across society. This sort of testing means that asymptomatic people who might otherwise continue to attend educational settings are identified and can then self-isolate.

### **Consent Form : (only If you have not already completed this)**

Thank you to all those who have already given consent for their child to take part in the testing programme. Whilst we are not able to insist that all students are tested, we do, however, strongly encourage everyone to give consent and help us keep everyone in our school and wider community safe. Therefore, we would kindly request that if you have not already given your consent for your child to be tested, then please could you complete [this form](#) **by 9am Friday 26th February** so we can plan accordingly.

Students who are aged 16 or over are able to give verbal consent themselves in school, however we would still prefer that this is given for them in advance.

This testing is offered to every child in secondary school (Year 7-11) to help identify children who are positive with Covid-19 but **do not show any symptoms** (this is known as **asymptomatic**). If you have more than one child at school, you will need to complete more than one form. This is because each child needs their own separate consent form.

### **Secondary Rapid Covid-19 Testing: Week Beginning Monday 1st March 2021**

The Department for Education has confirmed that schools do not have to begin testing until Monday 8th March and that schools can operate a phased return for year groups from that date in order to facilitate this. Whilst we appreciate that flexibility, it would concern us that operating a phased start could mean a significant and unnecessary delay for some students. In these circumstances, therefore, it seems sensible for us to conduct testing before all of the students return on Monday 8th March as we have them in good stock and our team are ready to go. The subsequent third test will be carried out on days when they are already back at school.



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Once you have given your consent, your child will be able to attend Atlantic for their rapid covid-19 test on their allocated dates and times. If easier, we are happy to support families and allow siblings to come in together on the same day - please can they come on the date and time allocated for the oldest child.

The result of the test will be sent directly from the NHS to the mobile phone number that was supplied on the consent form and is usually received within 30 minutes of the test result being recorded. We also get the results and we will also make contact with the parents/carer for any student who might record a positive test.

To enable us to complete the testing in a timely and orderly manner, **each tutor group** has been **allocated** a specific **time slot** to attend. It is very important that everyone sticks to the testing schedule outlined in the table below. The students **will** need to wear their uniform for this testing and have their **face mask** ready to put on before they enter the building.

Students will enter the school building via the **secondary entrance** and will be guided to the test site. Following their test, students will then be guided off site. Students **will be socially distanced** while they are on site and we don't expect students to be on site for more than **20 minutes**.

Tutor Group	Day & Date	Time	Day & Date	Time
9B	Monday 1st March	09:00	Thursday 4th March	09:00
9G	Monday 1st March	09:30	Thursday 4th March	09:30
9O	Monday 1st March	10:00	Thursday 4th March	10:00
10B	Monday 1st March	11:00	Thursday 4th March	11:00
10G	Monday 1st March	11:30	Thursday 4th March	11:30
10O	Monday 1st March	12:00	Thursday 4th March	12:00
11B	Monday 1st March	13:00	Thursday 4th March	13:00
11G	Monday 1st March	13:30	Thursday 4th March	13:30
11O	Monday 1st March	14:00	Thursday 4th March	14:00
7B	Tuesday 2nd March	09:00	Friday 5th March	09:00
7G	Tuesday 2nd March	09:30	Friday 5th March	09:30
7O	Tuesday 2nd March	10:00	Friday 5th March	10:00
8B	Tuesday 2nd March	11:00	Friday 5th March	11:00
8G	Tuesday 2nd March	11:30	Friday 5th March	11:30
8O	Tuesday 2nd March	12:00	Friday 5th March	12:00



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## Home Testing Kits

After the initial three tests have been completed in school, the government has indicated that **parents** will be able to **test** secondary school aged **children** a further **two times per week at home**. We will share further details on that process when they are available, including how parents can access the testing kits.

Whilst the news of a full return to school comes as a great relief, it is still very important that we remain vigilant in our measures to help combat the virus. The national school closure was enforced to help reduce the risk that students might play in community transmission. We still have to follow the advised adapted working practices to minimise that risk which include:

- Ensuring that a face mask is worn in all indoor communal areas.
- Ensuring that hands are sanitized on entry (and exit) to all rooms.
- Ensuring that students arrive and depart from school at the correct time.
- Ensuring that indoor spaces are well ventilated.
- Keeping students in their year group 'bubbles' when they are in indoor areas.

## Face masks

In addition to the above points, which were already in operation, the government has further strengthened its recommendations in relation to face masks. Staff and students in secondary schools and colleges are advised to wear face masks in all areas, **including classrooms**, where social distancing cannot be maintained as a temporary extra measure. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face mask would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example **in PE lessons**. We are taking this additional precautionary measure for a limited time during this period of high coronavirus prevalence in the community. These measures **will be in place until Easter**. As with all measures, **we will keep it under review** and update guidance at that point.

Please note that this will mean that appropriate face masks will now be required to be worn in most classrooms. Students who have already notified us about a medical exemption do not need to inform us again. We will remind the students of all these key points in their tutorial sessions over the next two weeks.

We do understand that some students and parents may feel anxious about the full return to school and I would encourage you to make contact with your child's Tutor or Head of Year, [via the pastoral contact form on the website](#), if there is something specific that you would like to share. We want to support everyone as best we can in the next part of this process. The government has confirmed that all students are expected to attend school and that normal attendance procedures will apply. Attendance at Atlantic during the Autumn term was excellent and actually the highest it has ever been.

Thank you for your patience during this time, for supporting us as we make the preparations necessary to get the school ready for all of our students and for all that you have done in supporting and encouraging your children with their remote learning.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Bishop Principal of Secondary