



# Atlantic Academy Portland

an Aspirations Academy

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

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4th February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer and Student

Thank you all for your continued support as we enter our 5th week of remote learning. It does seem hard to believe that January has come and gone already and that the February Half Term holiday is nearly with us.

### What have we all achieved in the past week?

- Phone calls , emails or voicemails to all **Year 10 and Year 7** students who have struggled to engage with their remote learning in order to support parents and to try and identify the barriers students are experiencing.
- **Parents Survey:** We have received some really positive parental feedback about our remote learning - see results later in letter.
- Launched the **Year 10 mentor programme** - students will now know who their mentor is and to expect communication soon.
- The Year 11 **Trust cycle assessment** started last week **Monday 25th January** and continues **until Friday 5th February.**
- **Year 7-11** Tutor time and DMB has focussed on **Children's Mental Health Week:** 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

### Children's Mental Health Week: 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2021

With the prospect of a longer lockdown it is so important that we look after ourselves and each other. This year's theme is 'Express Yourself', and as a school we are seeking to support this, especially during this very challenging time for so many young people. Expressing yourself is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas through creativity. This could be through art, music, writing and poetry, dance and drama, photography and film, and doing activities that make you feel good. Various ideas have been discussed this week during the tutor session or highlighted via the DMB which can be accessed on the google classroom. Thank you for your support in this matter. We hope that this week will provide an opportunity to raise awareness and enhance the wellbeing and self-esteem of a number of our students. Further ideas and resources can also be found [here](#).

This [second link](#) will take you to a range of resources you can use to help support your children as we continue to battle through this third lockdown.

### Live lesson and Engagement across the school Year 7-11

I would just like to reassure you that the **non engagement in a live lesson** notification does not carry any **negative points** and a child will not be penalised for not being able to access these sessions. Likewise, those who have attended will not be automatically awarded a positive for attending. Ms Winsborough has sent out a live lesson overview for Year 7-11 to help families prepare for these in advance

Each teacher can have between 150-200 students they oversee a day for lessons and trying to monitor every single child's completion of work is not an easy task hence, we have implemented a 2 week monitoring cycle and phone calls for non engagement (less than 50% ). So a reminder of the communication cycle, as we continue to monitor what student engagement looks like across all subjects:

W/B	YEAR GROUPS MONITORED	
1 February	8	11
8 February	9	10

### Parental Feedback : Remote Schooling Results



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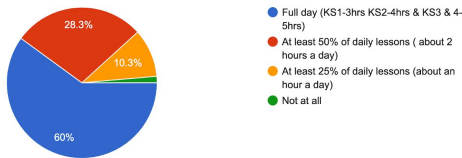
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I would like to thank you for taking the time to give feedback to us about your child's experience with our remote curriculum so we can continue to improve the engagement for all our students. We will look at all the comments and additional calls, where needed, will be made to see if any further support, guidance or explanation is needed to address any concerns raised.

I wanted to share the results with you all as I feel incredibly proud of the feedback. I think it shows what we have achieved as parents, students and as a school community working together. The results show that everyone wants to make sure the children remain engaged and we will all do whatever it takes to ensure students reach their full potential. However, I can see that, in such a difficult and strange time, we need to do more to make all members still feel part of the Atlantic community.

How often has your child accessed their daily remote learning in line with government expectations? (KS1 - 3hrs; KS2-4hrs; KS3 & 4- 5)

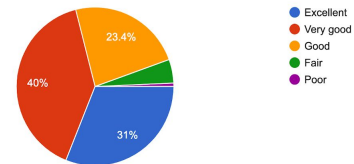
145 responses



88% of students are engaged at least for 50% of daily lessons and 60% in all lessons.

How do you rate the quality of the online resources?

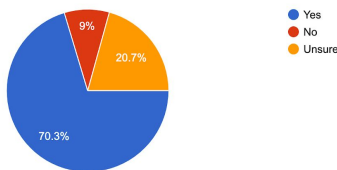
145 responses



94% rated the resources as good to excellent.

Does your child still feel part of the Atlantic community?

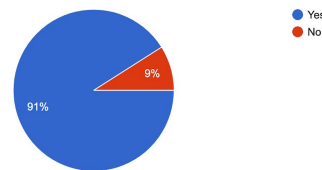
145 responses



70% said their child still felt part of the academy, 20% were unsure

Has your child been communicated with well during the school closure? (eg comments on Google Classroom, live discussions, tutor times, SIMS, emails etc)

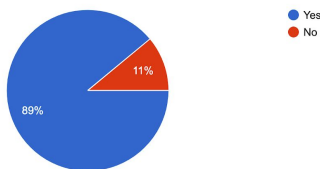
145 responses



91% felt their child had been communicated with well.

Has your child received positive praise or points during the school closure?

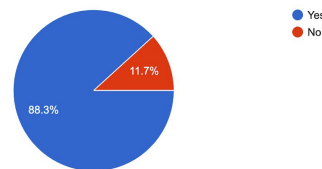
145 responses



89% said their child received positive praise.

Would you recommend the online learning resources to another parent?

145 responses



88% would recommend our resources.



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## Consultation on replacements for GCSE exams

The consultation published by Ofqual on how students might be awarded grades this summer closed on **Monday 1st February**. Mrs Migliari sent letters to parents of Year 11 students about this. The results of this consultation have not been published yet, but it does seem **increasingly likely** that some **smaller assessment** tasks that are **externally set by exam boards** will form part of the approach of **awarding grades**. As always, full details will be shared as soon as we have them.

## National Reopening of Schools

As you are aware, the national closure of schools at the start of this term was put into place to help limit the effect of what has been called 'community transmission'. Although the belief is that young people are much less susceptible to the potential effects of Covid-19, there was a significant concern that they might be acting as carriers of the virus, even if they were 'asymptomatic' and unaware they had it. At the start of term we were told that the initial period of closure would last until the end of this half term. However, you may have seen that last week the Prime Minister confirmed the national lockdown restrictions would last for at least another five weeks and that schools would not be reopening immediately after half term. He said that the earliest schools would be able to re-open was Monday 8th March. It was not a guarantee that all schools will reopen on this date and Mr Johnson said it 'depends on a lot of things going right'. Let us hope that all things that can go right, do go right, and that very soon we will be able to give you notice of a definitive return date.

## Students in School

We have seen a marked increase in the number of students requesting to come into school during this period of national lockdown. In response to a national spike in numbers, the government strengthened its message requesting people to 'Stay at Home, Protect the NHS and Save Lives' and said: 'Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school or college if required, but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can'. With this in mind, when requests are being made for provision in school, members of the pastoral team are being asked to check not just whether the child is eligible, but also specifically why the child cannot be at home. Given this message, we would naturally expect that the majority of these students to be in Years 7 and 8, as they are less able to look after themselves if they were to be otherwise left 'home alone'. We do understand that there will also be some exceptional circumstances where older students might be unable to be at home alone.

## February Half term

The DfE announced on Tuesday that schools will close as usual over February half-term, from **Monday 15th to Friday 19th** February, and are **not expected to remain open** to vulnerable children and the children of critical workers during that week. We are pleased to confirm that there will be the provision of Free School Meals during the February half term, funded by Dorset Council using the Covid Winter Grant. Families will receive a voucher via email to the value of £15 per eligible child.

Thank you as ever for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Bishop  
Principal of Secondary