



Atlantic Academy Portland

an Aspirations Academy

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

Maritime House
Southwell Business Park
Portland, Dorset. DT5 2NA

Tel: 01305 820262
Email: Office@atlantic-aspirations.org

www.atlantic-aspirations.org

8th March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer and Student

I really hope that all our students are looking forward to coming back to school and hopefully last week helped to reassure and address any concerns that some may have experienced about returning to school. We will do everything we can to make them feel as safe and happy as possible about coming back to school.

Not a lost generation

As we prepare to bring our students back to school, I just wanted to comment on some things that have been written and said about young people and the effects of the national school closure. There have been references to a 'lost generation' of young people, suggested figures detailing how many months (years even) students may have fallen behind and even suggestions about how much this may affect their potential earnings in years to come.

We think these observations do a great disservice and send the wrong message to many of our students. As well as the thousands of young people up and down the country, our students have worked extremely hard during the last few months and, in many cases, have learned a whole new set of skills. Many of our students have developed unmeasurable skills that will help them become independent young adults including skills such as being: **resilient; self disciplined; able to manage change; adaptable; self reflective; creative and empathetic.**

This doesn't mean that it hasn't been an incredibly difficult time; we know that there may well be gaps to fill and support needed for some students in order to catch up. So, while it is important that we look out for students who may need support 'catching up' and settling back into school, we also want to congratulate our students on the way that they have handled themselves during the pandemic and national school closures. All of our students are still young people who have fantastic opportunities ahead of them and we can't wait to return to our new normal and help them on their way.

PPEs 15th - 19th March

PPE assessments will take place the week of the 15th-19th March and will mainly be used to identify gaps in knowledge and allow teachers to adjust planning for the remainder of the school year. For Year 11, in addition to support planning, these assessments will add to the portfolio of evidence that will be used to assign Centre Assessed Grades. To support revision for these PPEs, there will be no Knowledge Organiser homework from the 8th March until the end of the PPEs.

Testing

We are incredibly proud of how well all of our students conducted themselves last week during the testing days. We completed over 1,000 tests last week (all negative) and we will continue testing while limiting disruption to learning once the students are back in school. If a student misses a test for any reason, Mrs Greaves and her team will monitor this and offer a 'catch up'.

Home testing Kits

Once the in school programme is completed, students who have taken part in the testing programme are entitled to be given home testing kits each week. We will be giving all students who have been given consent a home testing kit once the kits arrive. Our expected delivery date to the school is **Thursday 11th March**. Each kit will contain 7 tests and students will need to do 2 test a week; we suggest every **Sunday** and **Wednesday** to support the school week.

Weymouth Swannery Car Park
Site Details



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Home testing kits are also **now available for other family members** who live with a child attending a secondary school. This is available **to help detect potential community transmission** now that students are returning to school nationally. These are not available from schools but **can be collected** from a **local testing centre**. You can collect home test kits at a local collection point. Our local collection point is **Weymouth Swannery Car Park**. Anyone eighteen or over can collect and you do not need to make an appointment. You [can check online](#) to see if the location is busy to avoid long waiting times.

Order home test kits online

If you cannot get tested at your workplace, or are unable to go to a test site or collect test kits, [you can order a home test kit online](#).

If anyone tests positive or gets coronavirus symptoms, they should tell the school and self-isolate immediately and get a PCR test to confirm the result. In addition, they must self isolate and follow the stay at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection.

A negative result means the test did not find signs of coronavirus. But this does not guarantee you do not have coronavirus, so you should keep following all coronavirus advice including:

- Regular handwashing
- Social distancing
- Wearing a face covering where recommended.

If you have any symptoms of coronavirus, please book in for a test at a local testing centre. A test centre is available on Portland twice a week.

Covid- 19 testing team

I am sure you will all join me in thanking the staff who have done an amazing job in testing all the staff and students at Atlantic to enable us to have 2 tests before we return. Also, our pastoral team (pastoral leads and tutors) who have reassured our students and helped prepare them for their return deserve our thanks. They have all ensured our students are ready for Monday morning so we can get back to our core purpose of everyone in school learning whilst keeping the community as safe as possible.



Attendance

Attendance at school will be mandatory for all children. We recognise that, for some children and adults, a return to school will be an anxious time and we will do our best to mitigate these issues and to support members of our school community.

No parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend a given session.

Hot Food

Reminder, hot food will be available at AM and PM break times. Please make sure that you top up your sQuid account online to purchase food. If you are entitled to FSM, please remember that this only covers PM break food and, therefore, if you would like to purchase at AM break please top up your sQuid account.



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Free School Meals Entitlement

Over the last twelve months, we have seen an increasing number of our students become eligible for Free School Meals. If your circumstances have changed and you want to check to see if your child could be entitled to this support, then you can do this via the following link [here](#) or contact Mrs Fowler if you need further advice and guidance on zfowler@atlantic-aspirations.org

Congratulations to Mrs Bourke

Finally I just wanted to update you all that Mrs Bourke had a gorgeous baby girl on Monday 1st March. Both Mum and baby are doing well at home.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs L Bishop
Principal of Secondary