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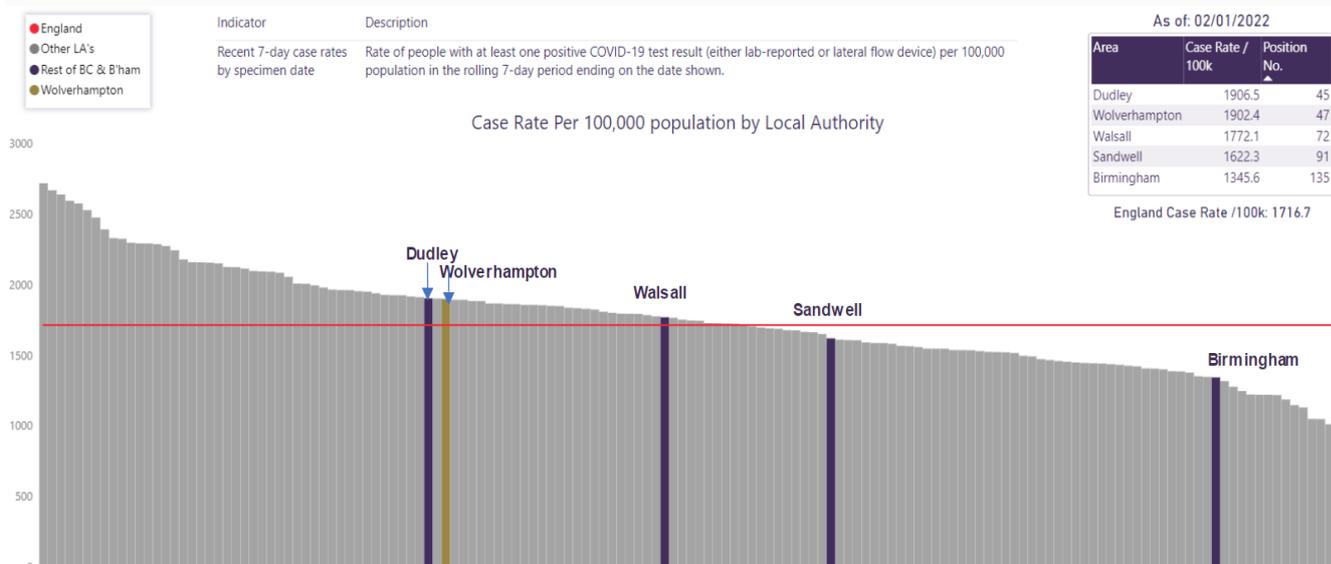
Thursday 6th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year to all our families and I trust Christmas was an enjoyable, fun family time. I am however, aware of the disruptions to many of your celebrations as a result of the high transmission rates and positive testing of family members.

Yesterday, I attended a Public Health meeting and data relating to the number of COVID 19 cases within Wolverhampton was shared - in relation to other local authorities, and data relating to different age groups. Following is some of the information which was shared with headteachers to help inform our contextual planning of control measures for maintaining both children's, staff's and parents'/ carers' wellbeing and the operational systems of our school.

Covid 19 case rates per 100,000 ranked by Local Authority



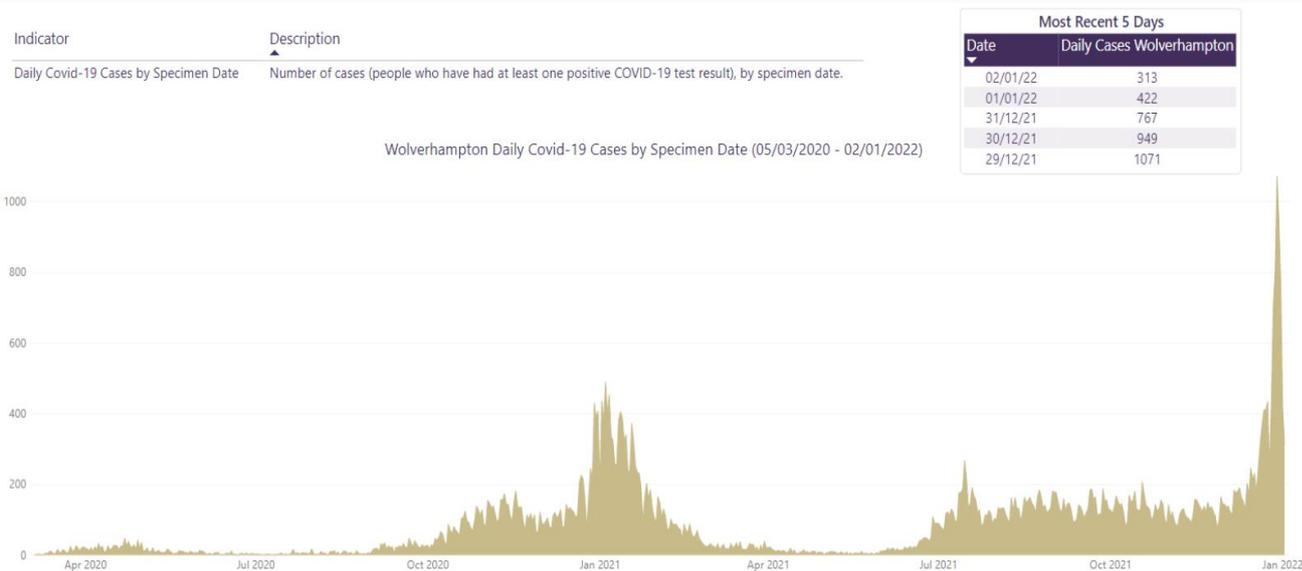
This represents data up to 2nd January 2022. For ease of reading, Wolverhampton ranks second in comparison with other local authorities: 1902.4 testing positive per 100,000.

In addition, there has been a phenomenal rise in the number of people testing positive in a 5-day period leading up to 2nd January 2022:

From tiny acorns mighty oaks grow...

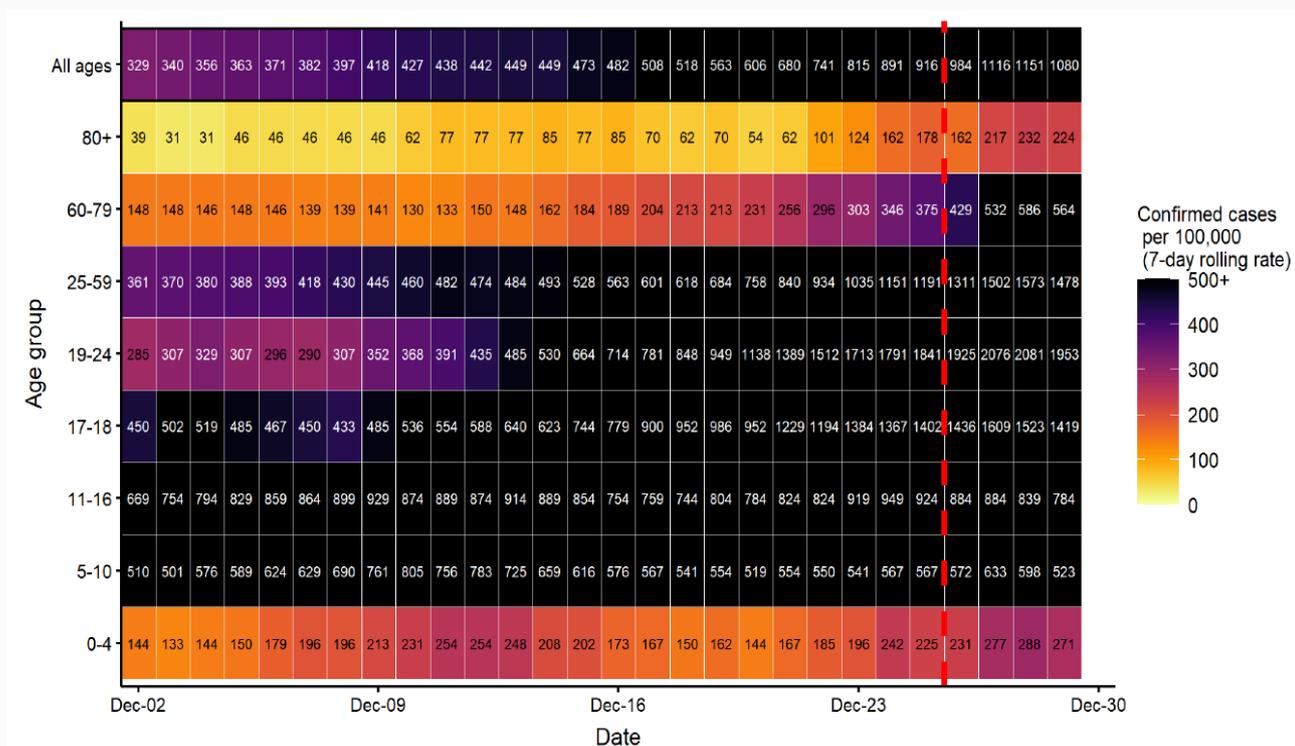


Covid 19 cases in Wolverhampton



In addition to the above data, an age-specific heat graph was shared detailing the number of confirmed cases per 100,000 in Wolverhampton:

Age-specific 7-day rolling case rates per 100,000 population



From tiny acorns mighty oaks grow...



All of the above information is concerning and I have been informed that Wolverhampton City Council predict seeing a peak of between 2,300 and 2,800 cases per 100,000 anticipating to begin next week. With this data in mind, as a section of the Public Sector, we have been advised to undertake contingency planning for remaining operational and for maintaining face to face teaching as far as it is possible to do so.

Therefore, we will:

- Maintain our distinct year groups with minimum movement of children throughout school;
- Maintain our distinct year group play spaces at break and lunchtime, continuing to utilise all areas of our outdoor play spaces for children to play within their year group thus minimising mixing of children from other year groups;
- Maintain distinct dining room tables for each year group with an anti-bacterial cleaning of tables in-between sittings;
- Enhanced anti-bacterial cleaning of frequent touch points such as tables, door handles and handrails;
- Maintaining single line movement on staircases;
- Promote regular hand washing and hand sanitising following break/ snack times, lunchtimes and PE activities;
- Review seating plans within classrooms, working within environments that are well ventilated. We realise this is difficult at this time of year given the temperatures we have seen this week alone, but during break and lunchtimes, we will ensure doors and windows are opened to expunge stale air in preparation for the next part of the school day;
- Continue our extra-curricular programme of activities with children accessing activities within their own year groups led by year group staff only. The exceptions to these are the Soccer 2000 clubs which will take place outdoors. If inclement weather is forecasted and a club has to be cancelled, a reimbursement will be made;
- Allow only essential visitors into school.

With all of the above listed controls, children have become used to the routines and do not see them as being extraordinary to normal practice. We do not want to alarm children or cause unnecessary worry which might impact upon their wellbeing and learning progress.

In addition to the above, following the new guidelines, we ask that:

- If your child presents with any new ill-health symptoms, a LFD test is undertaken and your child does not return to school unless the test returns a negative result and they feel well;
- If no LFD test is taken, your child can return to school 48 hours after feeling well;
- If, after 48 hours, your child feels well, it is advisable to take a further LFD test before returning to school;
- If your child has a new continuous cough, high temperature or loss of taste/ smell, seek a PCR test and only return to school when a negative result is obtained and your child feels well.

As a school, we continue to report all child/ staff member positive cases – both PCR and LFD - to Wolverhampton's Public Health team for careful monitoring of potential outbreaks. Your assistance in informing us of your child's symptoms is really appreciate and we kindly ask you to continue providing us with this information. It helps us immensely in monitoring our children's attendance.

Guidance from both Public Health and joint union professional associations advises schools to continue to promote: the vaccination programme; regular review of risk assessments; ventilation within learning

From tiny acorns mighty oaks grow...



environments; encouraging the wearing of face masks in communal areas (staff only); regular testing and promotion of social distancing – refraining from organising large gatherings, whole year group assemblies and face to face meetings. As the term progresses, we will inform you of our arrangements for sharing with you our planned year group assemblies and parent consultation meetings.

In addition to the above, we will reintroduce our one-way system within our school premises, indicated by the arrows and again, reintroduce a slightly earlier opening of doors in a morning and a staggered close of day time for some year groups.

Doors will open for all children at 8.40a.m. and remain open until 8.55a.m. providing a 15-minute window for arrival. Can I please request that you arrive on site no earlier than 8.40a.m. which will allow children to access classrooms immediately thus preventing a waiting and gathering on the school site. Thank you. In addition, I have changed some end of day dismissal times for some year groups. Times are as follows:

Year Group	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Start Of the Day	8.40-8.55a.m.						
End of the Day	3.00p.m.	3.10p.m.	3.15p.m.	3.15p.m.	3.20p.m.	3.25p.m.	3.25p.m.

The above guidelines and amendments to our school day will start with immediate effect (Friday 7th January 2022) and will be reviewed February half term time. In instances where the school day finishes earlier, the lunchtime period is adjusted. Invariably, some congestion may occur but we hope that by following the one-way system, this will be minimised. In addition, we understand that some of you will have longer waiting times with children being in different year groups with slightly different dismissal times. We thank you for your patience and understanding if this applies to you and if we can help, please speak to me.

In the event of an outbreak within school or high numbers of staff absences, we will immediately invoke our remote learning policy, moving teaching and learning to home remote learning. This will always be a last resort and we will do our utmost to maintain effective face to face learning. With the Director's predicted rises in positive cases, we must be prepared for such events.

I thank you for your understanding of the climate and situation we are currently experiencing and all actions have been planned for securing everyone's health and wellbeing. If you wish to discuss any of the above controls and changes, please telephone or email the School Office. Thank you, and we will continue to work in the best interests of our Oak Meadow family.

Yours sincerely,

S Arnold

Mr S Arnold
Headteacher

