



WALTON HIGH

Leading Learning

Walnut Tree Campus: Fyfield Barrow Milton Keynes MK7 7WH

Brooklands Campus: Fen Street Milton Keynes MK10 7HE

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www.waltonhigh.org.uk



Executive Principal: Michelle Currie
Principal: Sharon Alexander

Chair of Governors: Ayser Asif
Business Manager: Sukh Singh

9 February 2021

COVID-19 Update 32

Dear Parents

As we approach half term I wanted to update you on Walton High's preparations for the full reopening of schools that we hope will take place from 8 March. As always, the information given below is based on assumptions in the absence of guidance and are subject to change.

When schools were due to re-open in January, the Government had advised schools that they were to do so in a phased way with Y11 and Y13 returning a week before students in other year groups. There was also an expectation that students were tested before they returned and during their first week back. We are assuming that this is likely to also be the case in March. The Prime Minister is due to update the nation on 22 February so we are hopeful we will then know for definite. We will keep parents informed.

Lateral Flow Tests

We should like to thank the majority of parents for completing the form to indicate whether or not they gave consent for their child, if under 16 years old, to self-administer the lateral flow tests. Unfortunately, as you can see from the table below, there are still a significant number of people who have not responded despite receiving numerous texts and emails asking them to complete the form.

| Campus | Responses | Missing | % complete |
|--------------|-----------|---------|------------|
| Brooklands | 735 | 298 | 71% |
| Walnut Tree | 1138 | 335 | 77% |
| Total | 1873 | 633 | 75% |

I therefore urge all parents who have not yet given or withheld consent to do so as a matter of urgency by using this link to the online form https://bit.ly/C19_Consent. Not having all the information we need is preventing us from finalising our plans for students' return.

We know the tests can pick up asymptomatic cases as the testing we currently carry out twice weekly has identified a number of positive cases which would have otherwise gone undetected. This has helped to protect that person's family as well as the wider community. At the moment the Government is only proposing that students are tested on their return and not on a weekly basis. As Walton High has a campus in two parliamentary constituencies, I wrote to both MPs on 11 January requesting the school is supplied with sufficient tests to test everyone on a weekly basis. Other than a response from Ben Everitt's office incorrectly stating that Walton High was not in his constituency, neither MP has yet replied.

In a communication from the Department for Education last week, schools were informed that there were supply issues with tests. However, on Monday it was announced that the Government would be providing tests for more workplaces because weekly testing of people not working from home is an important strategy for stopping the spread of the new variant. Sometimes it is difficult to know what to believe.

Despite the current lockdown, we are still getting regular reports of members of the school community testing positive therefore weekly testing of students will help to reassure staff and those students and parents

who remain anxious about returning to school. For this reason we are very grateful to those parents and students who have consented to testing. Should we be provided with the number of tests needed, we have worked out that it is possible to carry out weekly self-testing by using one of Post-16 students' study sessions and 20 minutes from one of Year 7's to Year 11's PE lessons thus limiting any impact on learning.

It is important that parents continue to advise the school if their child tests positive, or has tested positive and have not yet notified us, so we have an accurate picture of how the virus is affecting the school community. Please let us know via covid19@mket.org.uk. In line with current guidance, we will also use this information to ensure students are not tested in school within 90 days of a positive test.

360° analysis of COVID-19's impact on students

Much has been said and written in the media about the impact lockdown is having on students' learning. Much of this seems to be predicated on the notion that they, and their teachers, are not doing anything when we know that staff are working very hard and most students, with support from their parents, are doing their best.

From conversations with students, however, it is clear that home learning is impacting on students in different ways. In order to determine the level of support each individual needs, we will be reviewing every student. The Tutor will take a lead role in this process which will start with students completing a short survey ([Annex A](#)). Tutors have already begun contacting students and this will continue after half term. During their meeting with their Tutees, Tutors will go through the questions with them to accurately capture the student's feedback. Subject teachers and support staff will also complete a questionnaire providing further information for Tutors.

Parents' feedback is crucial to ensuring the school gains an accurate picture of how home schooling has affected their child(ren). To facilitate this, during the week beginning 1 March, Tutors will hold remote consultation meetings with parents at which they will share their assessment of the findings from the student and staff survey. Where appropriate, the Head of Year or a member of the learning and/or pastoral support team will also attend these meetings. To enable Tutors to speak to the parents of all their Tutees, teachers will not be available to deliver live lessons and will not be able to chat or take calls from students that week.

Following the parent meeting, the Tutor will draft a plan that will set out what action needs to be taken to ensure the student fulfils their potential and identify what support might be most appropriate from that available. The implementation of the plans and their impact will be monitored by the Tutor on an ongoing basis with regular reviews held with the student and parents as necessary.

The Government has provided all schools with funding to support students "catch-up". Our analysis of every students' needs will enable us to target this funding where it is most needed and likely to have the biggest impact.

For students in Year 11 and Year 13, the plans will focus on transition to the next stage of their education, training or employment. Students have access to Unifrog (<https://www.unifrog.org/about>) to help them with next steps and decision making. In the near future, parents will be advised on how they can access this resource to further support their child. With the highest performing Post-16 centre in Milton Keynes, Walton High continues to be a popular destination for our own students and students from other schools (<https://www.waltonhigh.org.uk/post16/>). Information, advice and guidance meetings for Y11 with a member of the Senior Team or Head of Year started this week as we work to ensure all students have a secure destination for next year that meets their aspirations and aptitude.

Narrowing the digital divide

So far 289 students have received support through the provision of laptops, PCs, 4G devices or the use of mobile networks' scheme to extend data. We currently have 17 requests outstanding which will be fulfilled by the end of the week. If anyone still requires support, and has not yet filled in our online form, please use this link to make a request http://bit.ly/WH_IT_Request.

Many thanks to Mr Laverty and Mr Van Niekerk for their leadership of this work and to MKET's Technical Services team for making it happen.

It is our intention to continue to support students with ongoing access to IT at home and are exploring ways we can enable this to happen.

Milton Keynes Council is looking for MK based foster carers

Children come into foster care because they are unable to remain with their parents. Wherever Milton Keynes Council can, it tries to keep families together. Where this is not possible, it relies on Foster Carers to provide children with a safe, happy and supportive home.

Milton Keynes Council offers Foster Carers the following:

- Competitive rates of pay
- Regular Supervision and support
- Ongoing training
- 24/7 duty number
- Specialist independent consultant on trauma and attachment
- Support groups
- Membership of the Fostering Network
- Foster Carer mentors

To find out more about fostering in MK, and what it takes to foster, please visit Milton Keynes Council's [Fostering page](#) or call them on **08000 356 671**.

And finally . . .

With positive cases falling locally ([Annex B](#)) and nationally and the hope that the speedy roll out of the vaccine brings, we look forward to the full reopening of Walton High in the not too distant future. However, it is important to remember that the threat to people's well-being remains and we will all continue to have a part to play in keeping ourselves and others safe.

In the same way that some student's education has been more adversely affected than others, we are acutely aware of the personal loss some students have suffered, including the loss of parents. Our hearts go out to these families and we will continue to work with others to support them in the months ahead.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards



Michelle Currie
Executive Principal



Annex A

Student Home Learning survey

For each subject you study, which statement best describes how well you have engaged with the learning activities for each lesson.

- Accessed ALL the lessons and completed ALL the learning activities set
- Accessed ALL the lessons and completed MOST of the learning activities set
- Missed a couple of lessons and completed MOST of the learning activities set
- Missed a couple of lessons and completed SOME of the learning activities set
- Missed quite a few lessons and completed SOME of the learning activities set
- Missed quite a few lessons and completed HARDLY ANY of the learning activities set
- Missed MOST/ALL of the lessons and completed HARDLY ANY/NONE of the learning activities set

For each subject, which of the following have been used to support your home learning?

- Live lessons
- Recorded lessons
- Remote lessons with voiceover
- Remote lessons with no voiceover
- 1:1 MS Teams voice calls
- 1:1 MS Chat
- Teacher feedback via Firefly
- MS Teams group chat with other students
- Online learning, e.g. GCSE Pod, MyMaths

How helpful have you found the following in supporting your home learning?

- Very helpful
- Quite helpful
- Not at all helpful
- Not used

How does your learning and the progress you have made at home compare with your learning and progress at school?

- Much better
- Better
- About the same
- Worse
- Much worse

How concerned are you about your progress in each subject?

- Very concerned
- A little concerned
- Not concerned
- Subject not studied

Do you think you will need additional support when schools reopen?

- Yes
- No

As part of this question, the Tutor will explore barriers to learning and what support the student may need when schools fully reopen.

Annex B

8 February 2021 at 4:00pm

Cases in Milton Keynes ▾

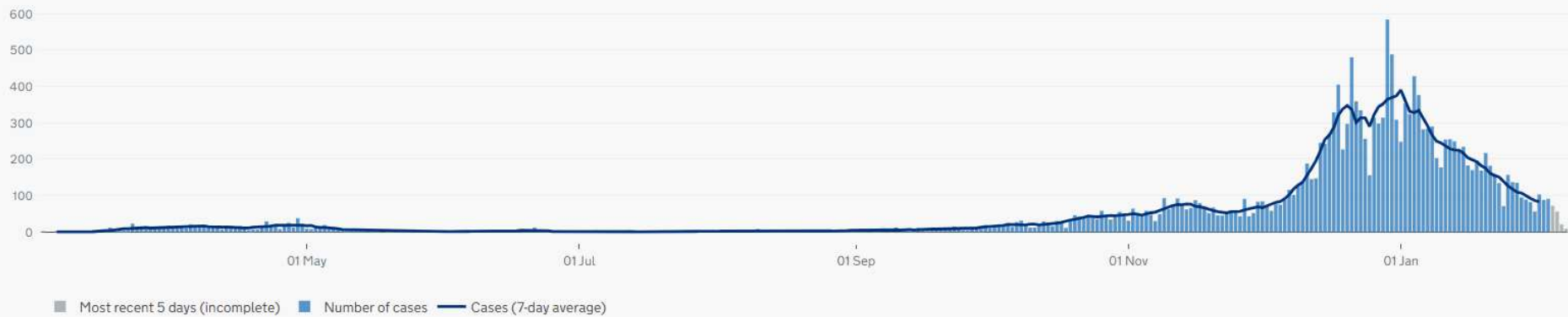
People tested positive

| Daily | Total |
|-------|--------|
| 47 | 18,130 |

Cases by specimen date

Number of people with at least one positive COVID-19 test result (either lab-reported or lateral flow device), by specimen date. Individuals tested positive more than once are only counted once, on the date of their first positive test. Data for the period ending 5 days before the date when the website was last updated with data for the selected area, highlighted in grey, is incomplete.

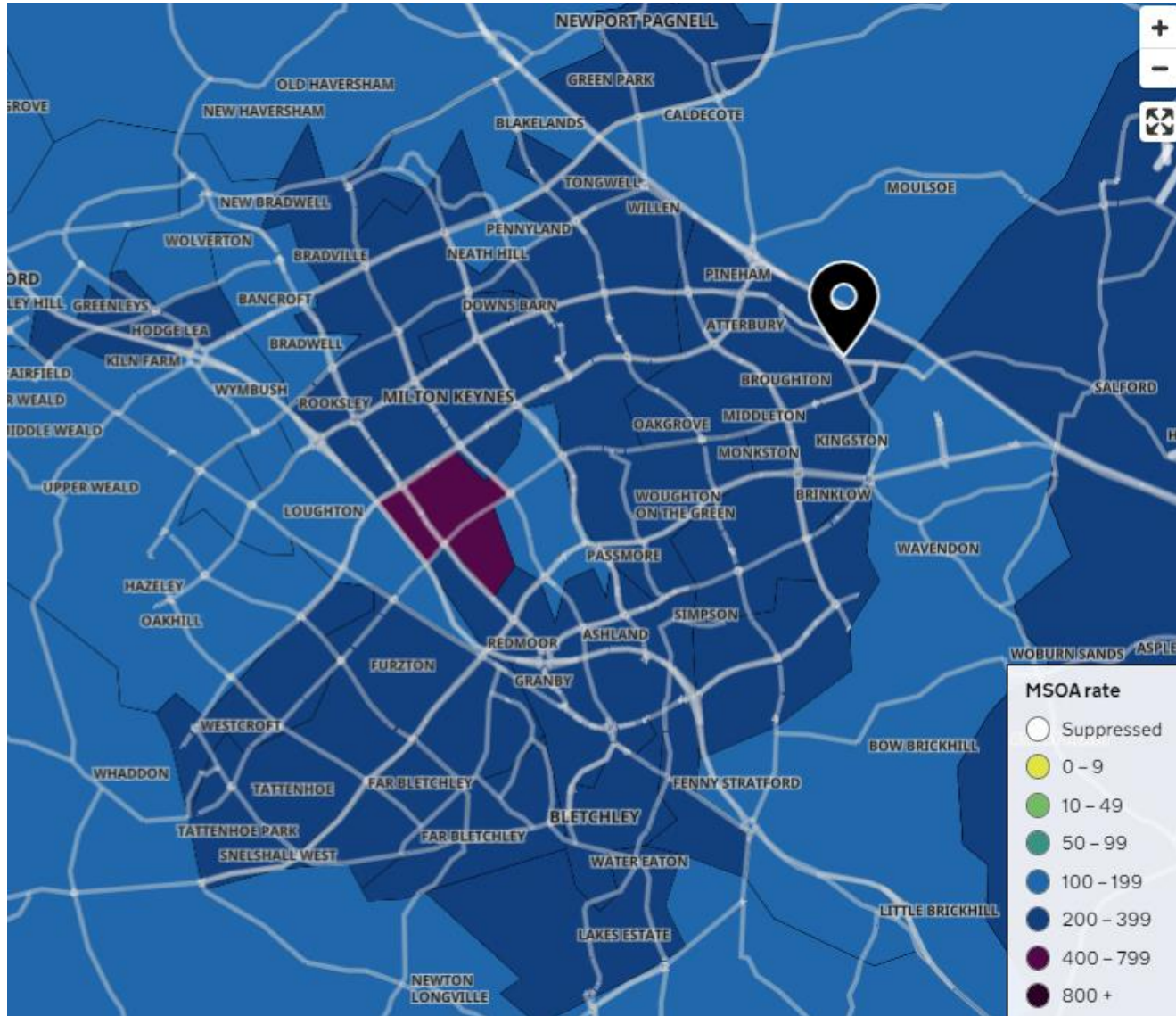
Daily Cumulative Data About



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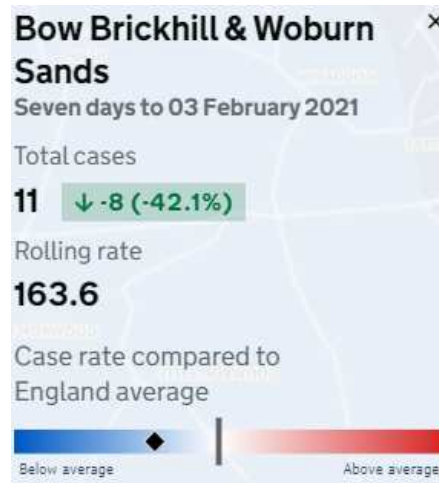
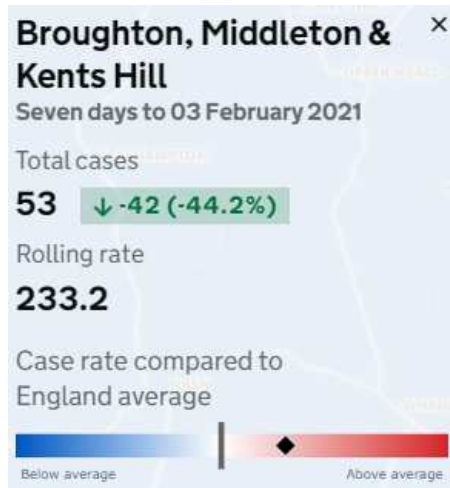
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Seven-day rolling rate of new cases by specimen date ending on 3 February 2021



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Cases

People tested positive in Milton Keynes

Latest data at local authority (upper tier) level provided on 8 February 2021

Daily

47

Last 7 days

481 ↓ -310 (-39.2%)

► Rate per 100k resident population: **224.2**

Deaths

Deaths within 28 days of positive test in Milton Keynes

Latest data at local authority (upper tier) level provided on 8 February 2021

Daily

3

Last 7 days

23 ↓ -4 (-14.8%)

Healthcare

Patients admitted in Milton Keynes University Hospital

Latest data at healthcare trust level provided on 31 January 2021

Daily

8

Last 7 days

101 ↓ -33 (-24.6%)