



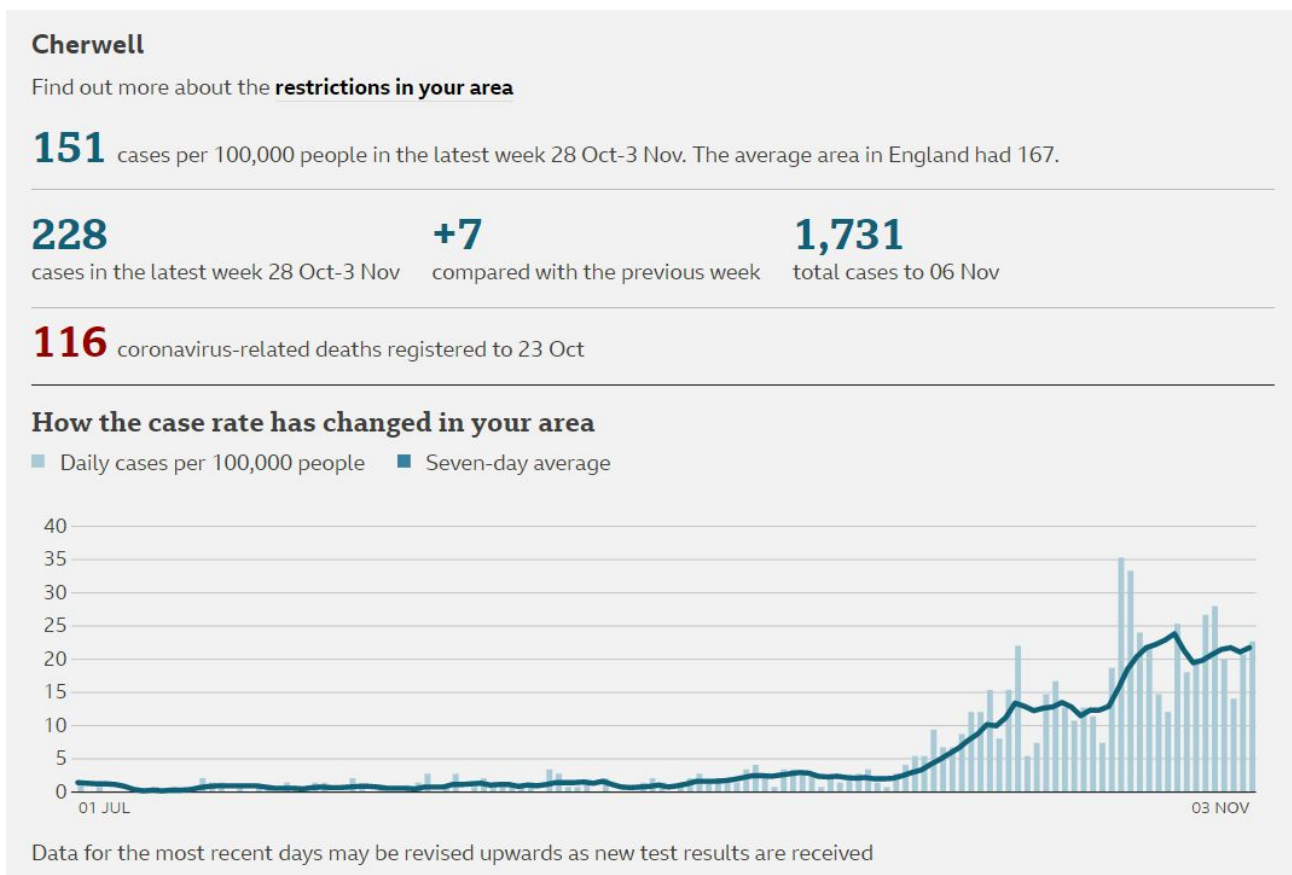
Miss Sylvia Thomas – Principal of Banbury Aspirations Campus

Dear Parents/Guardians,

After not being hit badly by Covid 19 in the first wave, the town and surrounding Cherwell region have seen a dramatic rise recently in cases. As a school we had only seen one positive case before half term but the holiday seems to have provided opportunities for transmission and we are now seeing the results of this, but strangely only on the Wykham Park side of the campus.

The graphic below I have copied from the website which I visit daily to keep abreast of trends in our local area

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51768274>



So far on campus, we have had one positive case in year 9, year 10, one in year 8, a small cluster of five students in Year 7, but this week a large cluster in Year 11 at Wykham Park. As of Monday 9th November, at Wykham Park, the whole of Year 11 are self-isolating along with a group of year 10's, one class of year 8 and a few other students from the year group. I wanted to say thank you for your support in ensuring that your children stay at home if they have been in contact with a student who has tested positive.

Students in whole classes who have been asked to self-isolate are provided with access to live lessons through Google Meet. It has been fantastic to see so many children accessing these lessons. All Year 11 students who were without a device at home (an iPad, laptop or chromebook) have now been loaned with



one. We have on order 60 more devices for students in Y7-10 and these are due to be delivered in December, despite us ordering as soon as the government's catch up funding being made available to us. These will be allocated on a needs basis to those children who we have determined have no access to technology at home. We are thrilled that we will be able to support so many of our students to link with us from home.

We currently have no staff who have tested positive for Covid 19, but we regularly have colleagues who need to self-isolate as they wait for test results to come back.

I wanted to explain to you the rationale behind decisions we make as to which students should self-isolate as I realise that this might seem complicated to many of you, with you left wondering why a friend of your child has been sent home but your son/daughter has not.

The guidance we are given by PHE is as follows


1. Anyone who has had prolonged contact with a person who has tested positive (this is defined as being within 2 metres for longer than 15 minutes) should self-isolate. This is the reason why we ask staff to stay at the front of their teaching space and not to move amongst the class during the lesson. It is also the reason why we are sending classes home in lower school.
2. Anyone who has been within a metre of a person who has tested positive for longer than 1 minute. This is the reason why we ask a child who has tested positive who they spend their breaktime and lunchtimes with.
3. There is no need for anyone who has not come into contact with an infected individual to self-isolate. This is why the siblings or friends of a self-isolating contact have no need to miss school.

In the case of Year 10 and Year 11 the situation is complicated by the fact that we made the decision that students should continue to be in sets and to study their option subjects as they are in KS4 and studying for their GCSEs. This is why when it became apparent that the cluster of Y11 students was getting bigger by the day that we needed to put a firebreak in to curtail the spread further.

I fully appreciate how worrying and frustrating the situation is at the moment and we are trying to balance education with public health. When we hear about a new positive case we cannot let parents know immediately if their children need to self-isolate before we have looked carefully at seating plans and friendship groups. It is imperative that your children bring with them a clean face covering every day. If they turn up without them we are asking them to sit in the glass dining room until someone from home can bring them a mask up to school. It is now no longer just guidance from the government that children should wear a face covering in communal areas in school. Fortunately, we chose to make the wearing of face masks in our corridors mandatory from September which is why we have not had to change our protocols as many schools suddenly have. We have impressed upon our students that they should not arrive at school too early and that they should make their way straight home after school in order to minimise extra social contact with too many other children. We would appreciate it if you would reiterate that message to them as parents.

If you have any concerns regarding Covid 19 and the measures we have in place please do not hesitate to contact school to discuss them.

Yours faithfully,



Miss S Thomas
Principal of Banbury Aspirations Campus