

HOLYWELL SCHOOL

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*A Church of England School
providing a Values Based Education*

Update letter - 3rd January 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

Delay to return to school for Years 5 and 6 students

This is not the letter I was hoping to write at the start of the new term. After consulting with the chair of governors, unions and staff and following several concerns from parents, we have made the difficult decision to delay the return to school for all students in Years 5 & 6 until Monday 18th January 2021.

Throughout the whole of the pandemic, I have committed to making decisions based on the safety of students and staff. Having reviewed the current scientific guidance, having considered both the national and local increase in COVID-19 cases and having reviewed the rapid transmission of the new variant of Covid-19, I believe that for everyone's safety, we should delay the start of term for all students until 18th January in line with the government advice for secondary schools.

I appreciate that this is late notice for families, however, over the last few days, there has been a significant shift in what constitutes a 'safe' environment at school and, as mentioned in the SAGE advice which was only made public on the 30th December:

"It is not known whether measures with similar stringency and adherence as Spring, with both primary and secondary schools closed, would be sufficient to bring R below 1 in the presence of the new variant. The introduction of Tier 4 measures in England combined with the school holidays will be informative of the strength of measures required to control the new variant but analysis of this will not be possible until mid-January."

Although relatively small in number, we have had cases across all year groups at Holywell (including Years 5 and 6 ... three in Year 6 over the Christmas period). National statistics also continue to record new cases in excess of 50,000. In the latest Central Bedfordshire overview (see below), Cranfield & Marston Moretaine was the most affected ward in CBC. This, along with general concerns about increased transmission within and outside of school, has led us to the decision to delay the return for Years 5 & 6 students. This mirrors what is happening with Years 7 & 8.

We will provide online learning for all students in Years 5 & 6 from Tuesday, 6th January and full details will be sent out tomorrow.

We will continue to offer in-school provision for students whose parents are critical workers or who are classed as vulnerable learners. If you need to take up this offer, please let us know as soon as possible (by email to school@holywellschool.co.uk) so we can make sure that we can accommodate students safely in school. If you can accommodate your son/daughter at home, this will be greatly appreciated.

We know that being in school is the best place for students in terms of their learning and mental health, however, I am hoping that this will be for a short period of time and that everyone's safety is paramount.

Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Mr MG Simpson
Headteacher



Headteacher: Mr MG Simpson MA, NPQH

Deputy Headteacher: Mr S Van Der Merwe – Deputy Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead: Miss A Stewart

Assistant Headteacher: Mrs H Donnellan – Designated Safeguarding Lead / SENDCo: Mrs J Davies

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COVID-19 Snapshot

As of 30th December 2020 (data reported up to 27th December 2020)

Central Bedfordshire

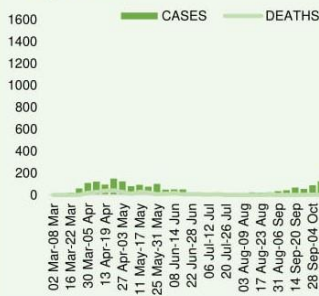
Population 288,648



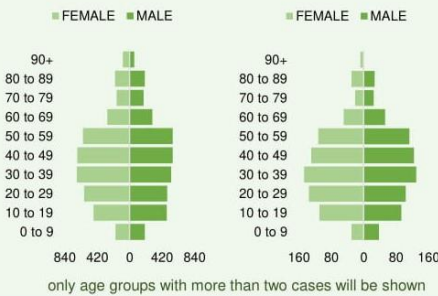
Direction of travel compares current snapshot against previous snapshot

key: ↑ Increasing ● no change ↓ decreasing

Number of COVID-19 cases by week



All cases by age and gender



Last 7 days by age and gender



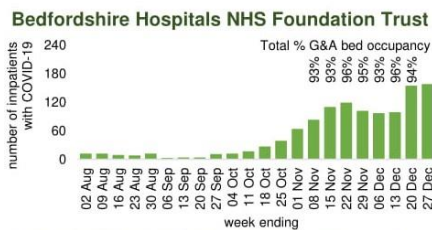
only age groups with more than two cases will be shown

Most affected wards in the last 7 days

Ward	Number of cases
Cranfield and Marston Moretaine	122
Leighton Buzzard North	88
Leighton Buzzard South	87
Amptill	86
Stotfold and Langford	82
Flitwick	73
Linslade	72
Arlesey	61
Potterton	55
Sandy	55
Shefford	53
Dunstable-Northfields	50
Toddington	50
Caddington	49
Houghton Hall	49
Dunstable-Watling	46
Dunstable-Icknield	43
Biggleswade North	37
Heath and Reach	34
Biggleswade South	33
Tithe Farm	32
Dunstable-Central	29
Barton-le-Clay	27
Westoning, Flitton and Greenfield	25
Dunstable-Manshead	24
Eaton Bray	24
Parkside	23
Silsoe and Shillington	23
Aspley and Woburn	22
Houghton Conquest and Haynes	16
Northill	12

only wards with more than two cases will be shown

Hospital bed occupancy and patients with COVID-19

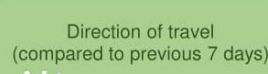
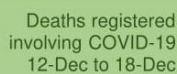


The maximum daily number of inpatients with COVID-19 each week with maximum percentage of all 'General & Acute' (G&A) hospital bed occupancy (combined figures for the Bedford and Luton & Dunstable hospital sites)

Number of weekly positive cases per 100,000 population



rates based on ONS mid year population 2019



(current snapshot against previous snapshot)

Please note: numbers in recent days may rise, reflecting diagnostic and reporting turnaround time. All detail within this report is the latest data available prior to publishing (30/12/2020).

Week-to-week comparisons are based on the data available at the time each snapshot was published.

Produced by: Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Milton Keynes Council Public Health Evidence and Intelligence Team - J Phillips.

Source: Public Health England (PHE), Office for National Statistics (ONS), NHS England.