

2 December 2021

Dear Parent / Guardian,

As we enter the final weeks of 2021, and in the run-up to Christmas and other celebrations, we would like to thank you and your children and young people for continuing to play your part to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Herefordshire and to keep our schools open.

COVID-19 case rates in 5-10 and 11-16 year-olds have been consistently high during this Autumn term. Currently 1 in every 100 Herefordshire children aged 5-16 is testing positive each week and this rate is increasing.

Chart 1: COVID-19 cases in Herefordshire by age (7 day rolling rate per 100,000 of the population)

Age group	Weekly rates per 100,000 population																				Number of					
																					Cases this week	people in age group				
80+	8	0	0	8	0	15	31	31	46	124	124	108	108	46	39	54	116	108	85	101	108	62	54	101	13	12,931
70-79	14	5	18	9	5	27	41	18	50	87	91	73	150	100	105	64	91	64	114	178	278	150	178	87	19	21,933
60-69	0	4	8	4	42	77	61	35	38	65	134	150	199	150	104	146	138	169	184	326	368	345	337	245	64	26,084
50-59	14	21	24	56	70	115	143	101	111	97	219	264	184	250	170	243	313	261	337	386	424	382	365	410	118	28,766
40-49	45	23	18	77	108	203	217	163	104	172	267	334	361	380	357	705	642	610	501	538	601	515	456	592	131	22,134
30-39	77	50	36	72	90	371	244	181	213	299	280	371	348	407	303	407	489	385	430	480	371	538	493	484	107	22,104
22-29	92	98	135	215	283	628	511	314	283	739	646	474	382	382	277	314	209	240	197	265	369	314	271	222	36	16,245
18-21	76	320	168	656	610	1,281	824	610	595	1,769	2,334	702	885	381	229	214	351	168	244	259	229	259	290	244	16	6,556
11-17	28	50	64	206	277	860	519	284	270	320	1,137	682	867	1,087	1,677	3,695	3,226	1,983	1,983	1,748	1,236	839	1,009	1,258	177	14,072
5-10	8	39	39	47	54	194	264	156	86	202	288	358	264	436	506	1,190	1,416	1,291	747	825	825	926	972	1,517	195	12,856
<5	0	55	33	55	55	99	175	99	44	88	197	143	164	186	175	219	230	241	175	164	197	263	175	252	23	9,120
Herefordshire	31	40	39	89	110	274	224	147	138	259	378	300	311	325	325	588	584	459	428	467	457	416	412	466		
Total weekly cases	60	78	75	171	213	529	432	283	267	500	728	579	600	626	627	1,133	1,125	884	826	900	881	803	795	899		
	11 Jun	18 Jun	25 Jun	02 Jul	09 Jul	16 Jul	23 Jul	30 Jul	06 Aug	13 Aug	20 Aug	27 Aug	03 Sep	10 Sep	17 Sep	24 Sep	01 Oct	08 Oct	15 Oct	22 Oct	29 Oct	05 Nov	12 Nov	19 Nov		

Whilst the health risks of COVID-19 infection to children and young people are thankfully low¹, the impact of missed school is high². These high case rates in children and young people also increase the risk of spreading COVID-19 to those who are more vulnerable.

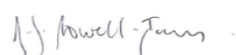
From 30 November 2021, the government’s COVID-19 safety advice relating to the wearing of face coverings has changed for schools, colleges and nurseries. The following guidance now applies:

- Pupils, staff and visitors to secondary schools and childcare settings are being “strongly advised” to wear face masks in communal areas.
- Children and young people aged 11 and over, unless they are exempt, should wear a face covering when travelling on dedicated school transport to and from educational settings. Face coverings must be worn on all public transport.


You can find out more about what you can do to keep safe by visiting www.herefordshire.gov.uk/safehere. The webpage includes links to important information on how to test against COVID-19 and how to take up the offer of a vaccination.

Thank you for continuing to play your part in helping to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Herefordshire.

Yours sincerely



BECKY HOWELL-JONES
INTERIM DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH



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1 [Risk factors for intensive care admission and death amongst children and young people admitted to hospital with COVID-19 and PIMS-TS in England during the first pandemic year | medRxiv](#)
 2 [Impacts of school closures on physical and mental health of children and young people: a systematic review | medRxiv](#)