Dear Parents and Carers,

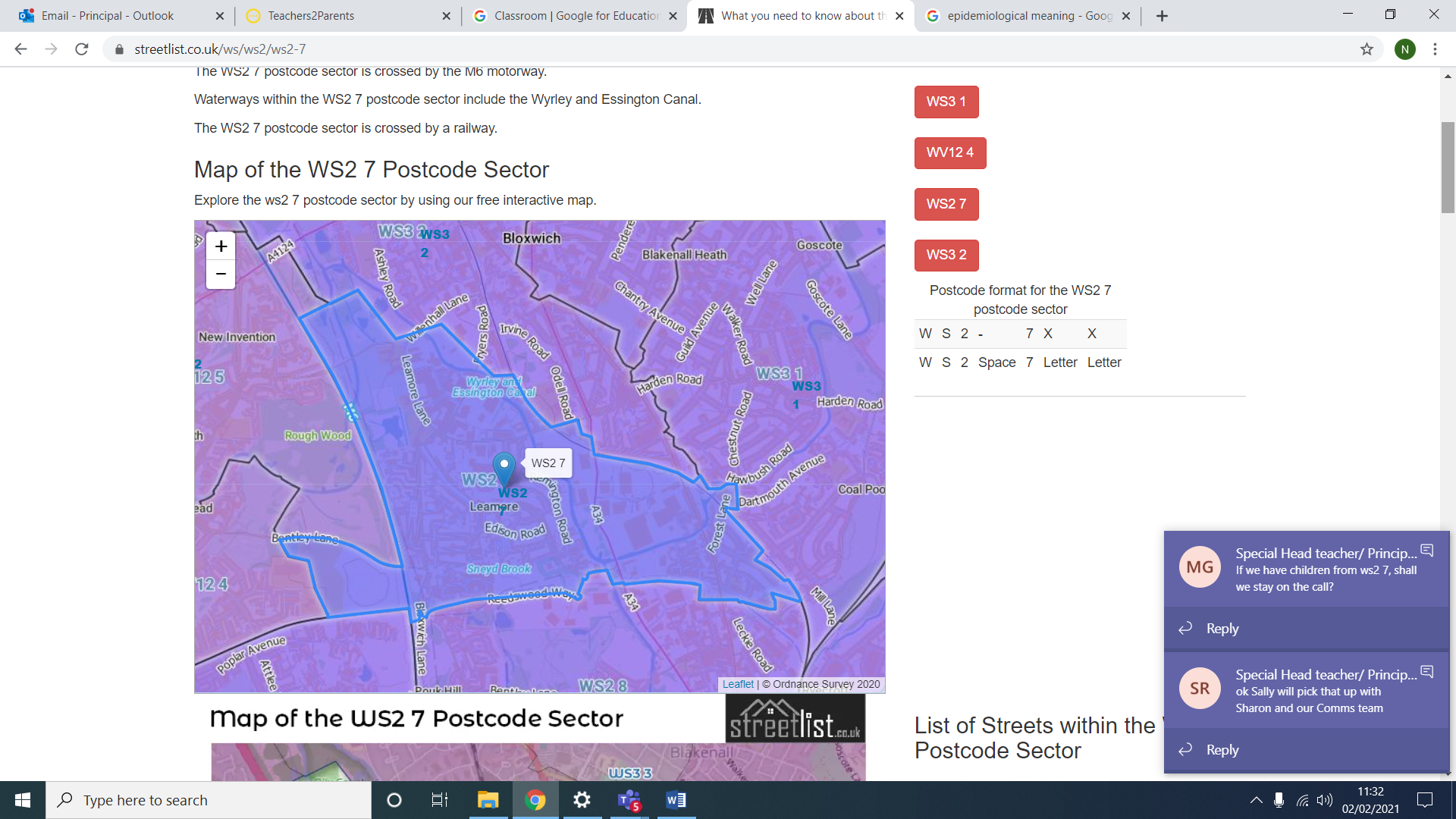
Following the government announcement yesterday in relation to the 8 local authorities that are a concern due to the South African variant of COVID-19, I can provide additional information gained at 11am today from a special briefing with Walsall Local Authority and Public Health England. The briefing was led by Dr Umar Viswanathan.

**The main point that the doctor stated was please DO NOT PANIC.**

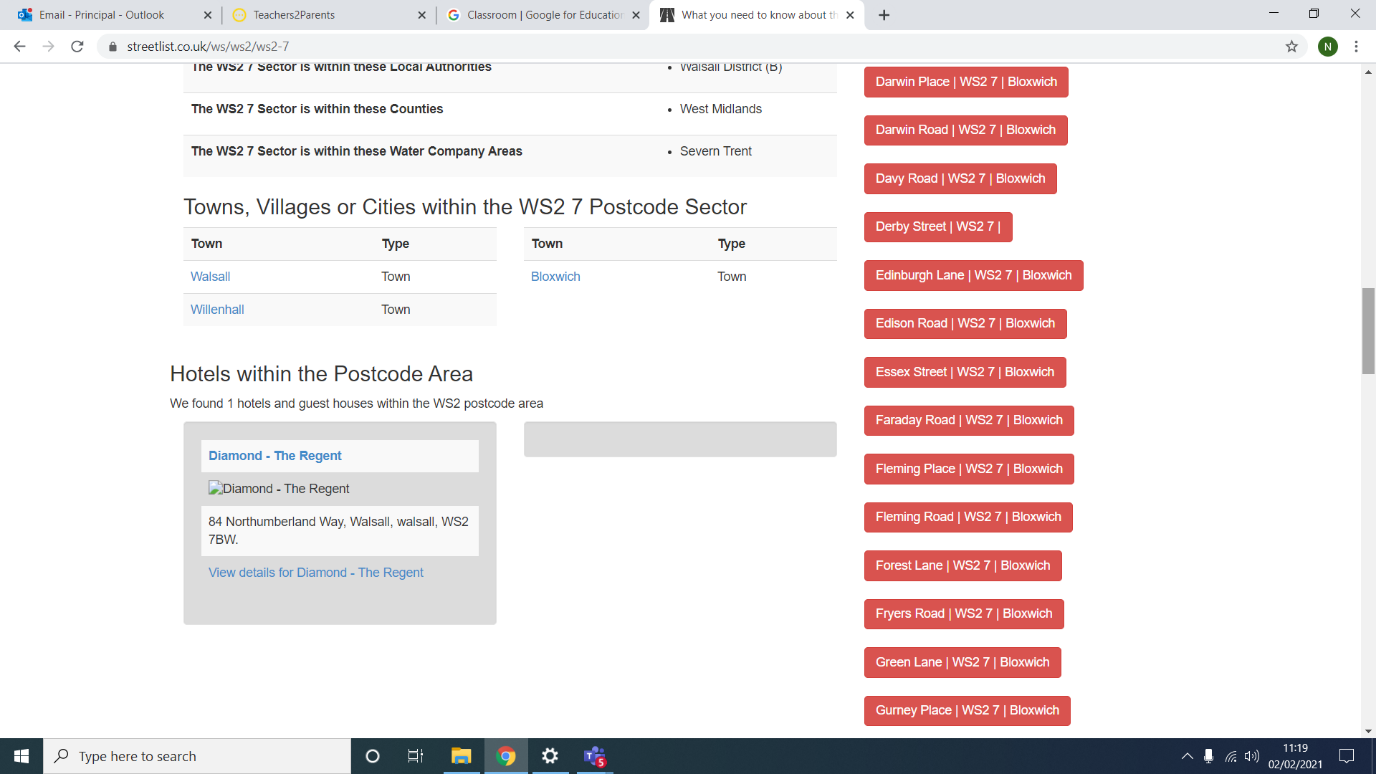
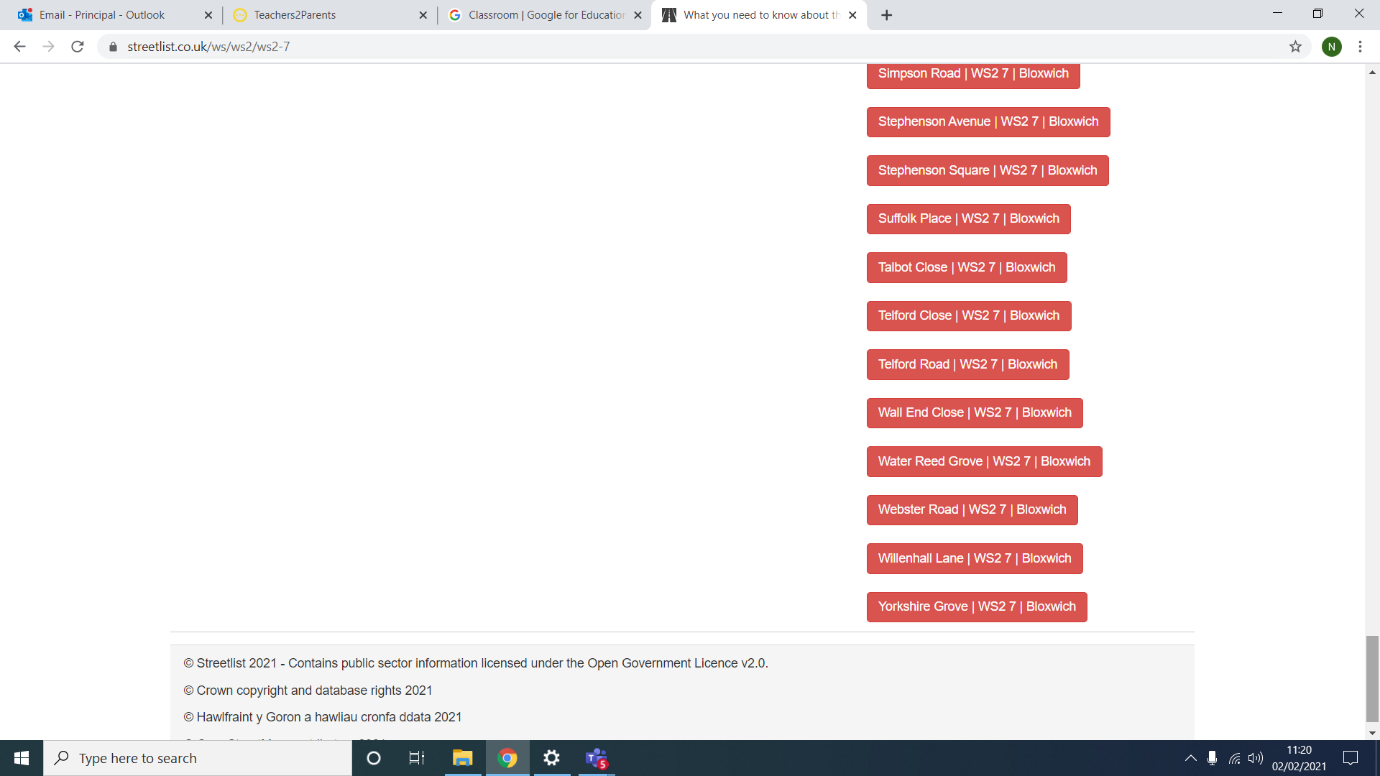
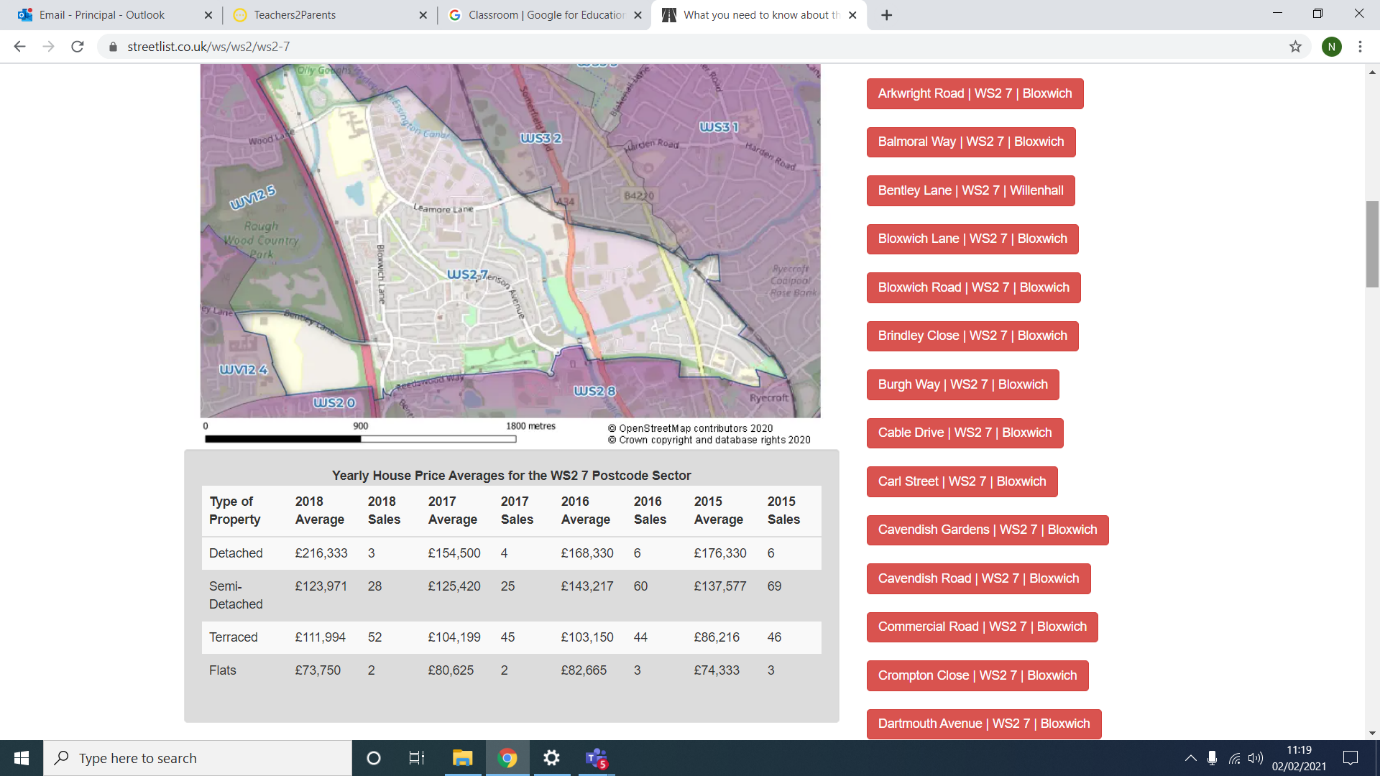
**Keep following the rules and if you are offered a test, PLEASE take up the offer and complete it.**

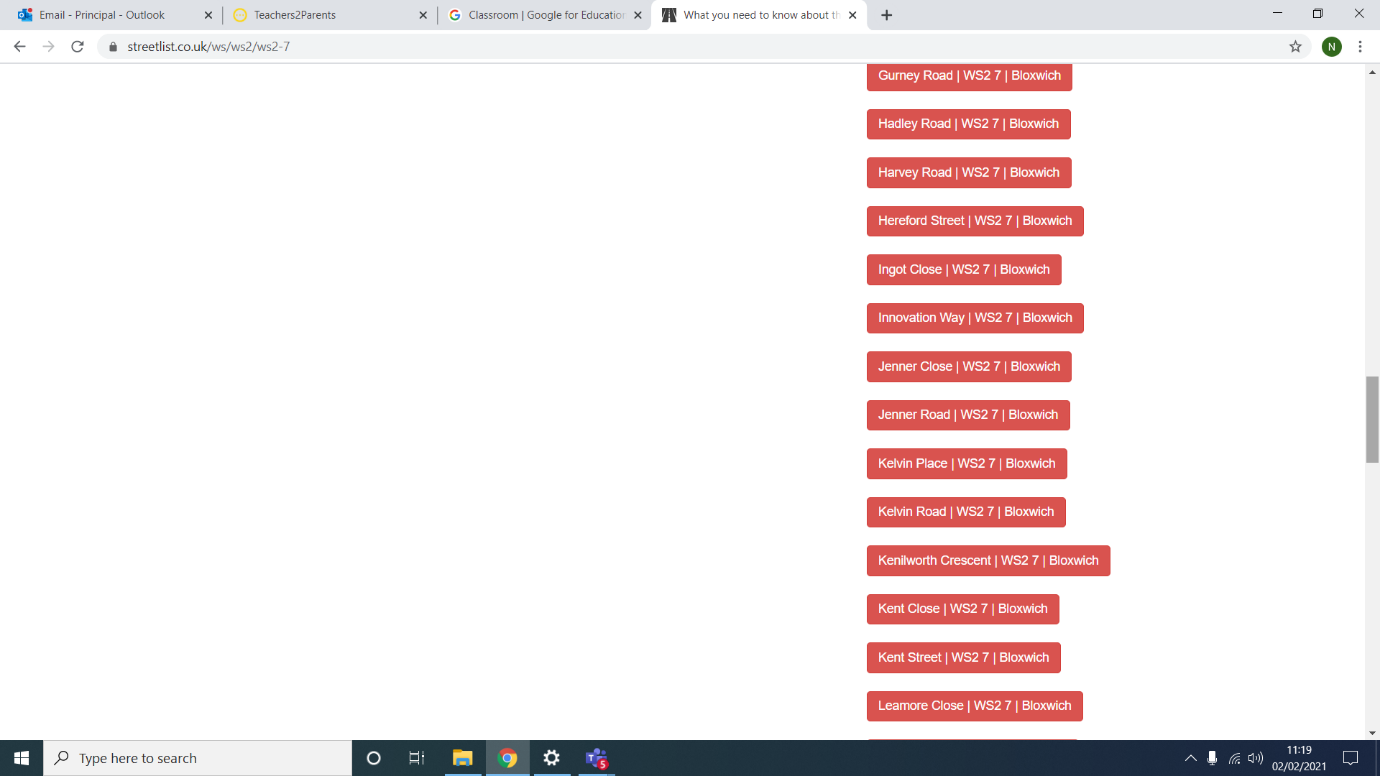
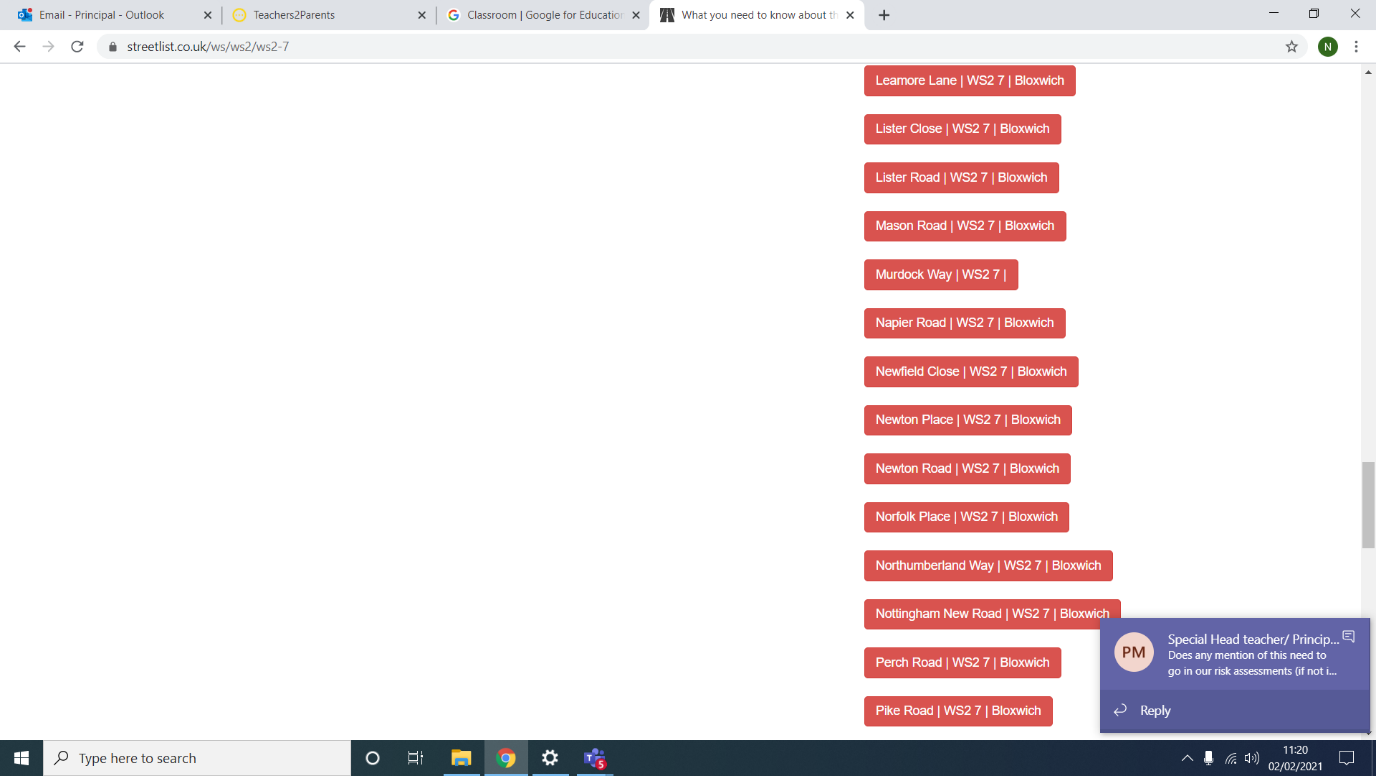
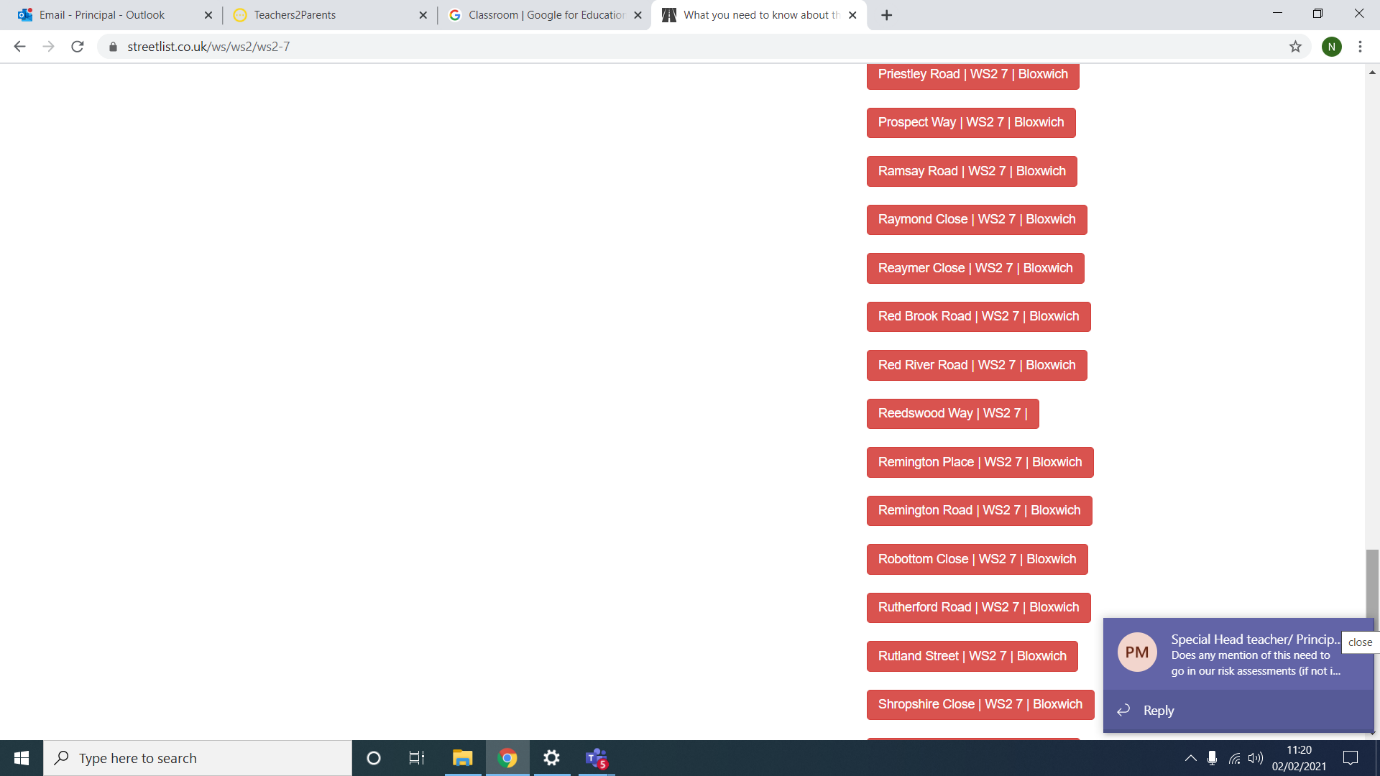
Further information.

* This new South African variant is one of 4 different variants of Covid-19.
* It is not transmitted in any different a way than the one that was identified first in this country last year
* There is no evidence, yet, that it is any more severe when caught
* The main focus locally is on the WS2 7 postcode, with people over 18 who live in this area being offered tests to complete at home.



* There will be people completing a door to door delivery service offering the tests out.
* WS2 7 is the area where additional screening of tests will be completed. This is what is called an “epidemiological exercise” and means that deeper screening measures will be actioned to look at how the diseases occurs. This does not mean the test for the person is done in any different a way it is just how they process the test once it is completed.
* This exercise is the government trying to find out more about this particular variant.

**Streets in the WS2 7 area**



**What does this mean for me or my child as I live in WS2 7.**

The guidance says to continue to follow the rules of Hands, Face and Space and stay at home unless you need to leave for essential purposes. There is no reason that schools should be closed for those pupils of Key worker or those who are vulnerable.

If you are offered a test please take it as this variant, (as with the other 3 variants) needs to be curbed within the community. There is still an extremely high rate of infection in the Walsall area and this needs to be reduced significantly.

If you require further information the Walsall Council website has been updated and will continue to be regularly updated.

Any further updates I receive, I will continue to inform you.

Please take care. Please stay safe, Please follow the rules.

We miss you all

Mrs Baddeley