

It's Christmas in May for schoolchildren

IF you are unsure what day of the week it is during lockdown, why not make it Christmas Day? That is what happened at Little Parndon Primary Academy, in Harlow, when the catering team decided to shake things up and put smiles on pupils' faces.

The school remains open for vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers. Having seen the joy a special VE Day picnic brought to pupils, head cook Gemma Bell and assistant head cook Michaela Hester began planning further themed lunches.

Maymas – Christmas in May – was born as another way of entertaining pupils, complete with a festive tree topped with the sun, sunshine bunting and gift bags with Santa in shorts on the front. Pupils had a roast chicken meal, finished off with Christmas tree shaped biscuits. The school is also hosting a



A Christmas-themed lunch for vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers at Little Parndon Primary Academy

Mayloween – Halloween in May – themed lunch. Headteacher Mark Evans said: "Maymas was an amazing idea. Gemma and Michaela are forever creating fun, exciting and often themed lunches

for our children. They make lunchtimes fun and inject a lot of playful energy to our school days. "We have a great team at Little Parndon and the two of them are such key players in that."

Inquiry into bus worker deaths

Is enough being done to protect bus drivers?

By Jessie Mathewson

BUS drivers are dying of coronavirus in the capital – and Transport for London (TfL) has commissioned an urgent inquiry to find out why.

A total of 33 bus workers – including 29 drivers – have died of Covid-19 so far, the network said.

Now TfL has asked University College London to launch an independent review of the deaths.

Male bus drivers had a death rate of 26.4 per 100,000 – higher than male shop workers at 19.8.

The first stage of the Centre for Health Equity study will ask if TfL is doing everything possible to protect bus workers.

The network is now cleaning buses with the same anti-viral spray used in hospitals, giving out hand sanitiser and providing face masks for workers.

It has banned front-door boarding on buses and put a film over the holes in driver cabins to keep staff safe from infection.

But bus drivers previously told the Local Democracy Ser-



TfL has asked UCL to investigate. Photo: Pixabay

vice these measures are not happening across the board – and they still feel at risk.

The second stage of the UCL research will assess how job risk has contributed to the number of bus drivers dying – TfL says this stage will take three to four months.

The exact scope of phase two has not been finalised – but bus drivers have warned that long hours and exhausting shift rotas

have left them feeling vulnerable to the virus.

Last year, a report by Loughborough University found one in six drivers had fallen asleep at the wheel in the last year.

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan said bus worker deaths were "personal" because his father was a bus driver. "The transport workers who have lost their lives are constantly in my thoughts," he added.

"It is with them in mind that I will continue to do absolutely everything I can to keep staff and passengers safe."

But some bus drivers today worry the UCL review will make little difference.

"We all know the review will take years until it's finalised," warned one South London driver. "We've seen it in the past with Grenfell and other inquiries, so this doesn't wash with me."

Another driver said he doubted the study would lead to significant change – because last year's study on driver fatigue did "mostly nothing" for working conditions.

Firms are at risk of Legionnaires

BUSINESSES and workplaces have been warned of the risk of contaminated water supplies when they reopen. Water systems in premises that have been closed due to coronavirus have a risk of containing Legionella bacteria which can cause serious illness when businesses reopen. Legionnaires disease is a form of atypical pneumonia caused by any type of Legionella bacteria.

Symptoms include cough, shortness of breath, high fever, muscle pains, and headaches. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhoea may also occur. Water systems that are not being used and maintained effectively are very likely to have increased levels of bacteria present, including the Legionella bacteria. Groups of people susceptible to Legionnaires' disease are

similar to those who are most susceptible to serious complications from Covid-19 infection. Business owners and employers are responsible for carrying out risk assessments of water supplies under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. For more information visit: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/what-you-must-do.htm#>



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