

# KLA Bulletin

Monday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Dear parents, pupils and carers,

I promised to write to everyone today about the approaches we are taking as a school in dealing with the comparatively few cases of covid-19 that we have seen within our community, to inform you and hopefully to reassure those who need it (and most days that would include me!) I will try to be as clear as I can, and if I fail to make anything as clear as I hope, please do email me on [alan.fletcher@kla.eastern-mat.co.uk](mailto:alan.fletcher@kla.eastern-mat.co.uk) for a fuller response to your query.

I appreciate that these are worrying times, and that parents may well be becoming ever-more anxious as time passes with no apparent easing of the pandemic. Equally, I have to be honest and say that I am not an expert in public health, and that all I can do is follow the advice that I am given by those who are. By working closely together in this way we have been able to maintain education for your children, whilst managing the small number of cases we have had within our school community, so far without having had to send whole year groups home. We do seem to be managing one or two new, unrelated, cases most days, and I can only surmise that this seems to be a pattern that is set for the foreseeable future. We are trying to manage these as calmly and with as little fuss as possible, as I feel it is important to ensure that KLA provides as consistent an air of normality as we can possibly manage right now! I hope you agree with this approach.

I am working to the clear instruction that I have been given by the Department for Education that schools must not close unless told to do so by the public health authorities. Everything we have done this academic year at KLA has been in service of that goal. That is not to say however that we under-estimate the very real anxieties that some parents feel around this issue. I completely understand those concerns. We are told by scientists that pupils do not catch this virus often very badly, but I am as worried as anyone about the potential for cases – including asymptomatic ones which we don't even know exist in school – to carry infection home to those much more at risk. I want parents to feel confident that they do not have to choose between worrying about the health of their family or ensuring the quality of a child's education – if you are concerned about sending your children into school in the current circumstances please email me on the address above, and we will work out an approach together that secures your child's education and the safety of your wider family.

Yesterday we received confirmation of a positive test within the canteen team, which I wrote to you about last night. I have spoken with the local public health team who have recommended that the whole canteen team do self-isolate for the 14-day period, as they work in a small, confined space where total social distancing is very difficult to achieve. Once again, the health authorities are very happy with the anti-infection measures we have taken, and have advised us that there is no further need for anyone else to self-isolate as a result of this case. The canteen, however, will be closed for the next fortnight. A team of volunteer staff, led by those with the necessary food hygiene qualifications, has made several hundred packed lunches today for those pupils entitled to Free School Meals as well as for any other pupil who has no lunch in school for any reason – we will not allow any child to go hungry through the school day. I am hugely grateful to those KLA staff who have agreed to do this in addition to their normal duties to help us do this. We will continue to do this as best we can for the duration of the canteen closure. If your child is not entitled to Free School Meals, your help in ensuring that they attend each day with a packed lunch would be incredibly appreciated.

Finally, I also have to inform everyone that we have had another positive test result returned for a Year 10 pupil over the weekend. We have completed our own contact tracing procedure (we

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KING'S LYNN ACADEMY

are getting really quite practised at this now!) and as a result sent home a further small group of pupils to self-isolate for 14 days. Those parents have all been contacted separately today. Again, no other pupil other than those identified as close contacts need self-isolate.

As always, I am hugely grateful for your support of KLA at a time when nothing is straightforward! We will continue to do everything we can to keep our school a place that is as happy and normal as we can possibly make it, despite the challenging circumstances. Your support of this work means a great deal to all the team here. For my part, I long for the day when my communications home to you all can focus on learning rather than health precautions!

Take care everyone,

Alan Fletcher