

2nd January 2021 **School Update**

Dear Parents, Carers, and Families,

We hope this finds you well and safe. We wrote to you on 31st December following updates from the government on school closures for secondary schools up to 18th January. The government has now also confirmed that primary schools across London will be closed until 18th January. We know that you will have questions and want to provide you with these key details.

1) Special schools are still listed as open but primary and secondary schools are closed. Is this because there is less risk of COVID-19 for our school?

No. We had 40 positive cases of COVID-19 between September and December. This was with our numerous safety measures in place. Pupils in our school cannot socially distance independently and need support with their self-care and medical interventions. Staff in our school need to work directly with your child in order to facilitate their engagement in learning.

2) Is there anything else we can add to our safety measures?

No. We have changed the design of our school, classrooms, timetable and approaches to teaching. We have stopped the use of the full building, visitors on site, cross class learning, offsite learning, and face to face meetings. We have the bubble transport with allocated times for arrival and departure. This is in addition to our bubble safety measures and every classroom having a sink for regular handwashing, antibacterial gel stations throughout the school, PPE, 2 meter markings, and daily additional cleans.

<https://swisscottage.camden.sch.uk/our-school/september-2020-school-safety-measures/>

3) Will mass testing be in place from 4th January?

No. We have prepared for this over the holidays with the Department for Education guidance that has come through. Our school has 260 pupils and 212 staff. We need to ensure the way we mass test does not impact on our bubble systems. We have not received the test kits or other resources from the DfE yet. We aim to be ready for mass testing during the week of 11th January 2021.

4) Will I be fined if I do not send my child into school?

No. We respect any decision that any family takes. You would not be fined.

5) Can we move to the Virtual School up to 18th January to match the safety for primary and secondary schools?

We have updated our survey based on the changes from the government. Your feedback will help us plan our Virtual School options for each class.

Information from Camden Local Authority:

- 1) During December 2020 there has been a significant increase in COVID infections in Camden and across London.
- 2) Camden cases have increased 23% in the last week.
- 3) There were over 1,398 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Camden in the last week.

We are asking you to help us with our planning. The survey is now open for all families to complete. Please complete this as soon as possible. This is informing planning for a fixed period of time up to Friday, 15th January matching the primary and secondary school closure period. We respect any views you have and need a response from every family.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/3rdJan21FamilySurvey/>

We thank you in advance for supporting us as we work together to protect this community.

Yours Sincerely,

Vijita Patel Rebecca Shaw
Principal Vice Principal