

25<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Dear Families,

Good afternoon. Parents have contacted the school today about a message placed on a neighbourhood app and a google review about the school. The parents have shared their distress at the content and depiction of the school. I am writing to reassure all families with factual context of each point due to the inaccuracies.

Our school has an open-door culture for communication. The relationship between school and family is important to us. There will always be a small number of families with priorities which the leadership team support. We tend to find this is related to staffing preferences, changes they are observing in their child's profile, concerns about an individual incident linked to the child's behaviour plan, LA transport, multi-agency provision such as NHS therapies, or a school placement decision.

Meetings that are requested are always organised because we want to move things in the right direction through an agreed plan. We bring additional professionals to the meetings if this will support the solution. The only factor out of our control is the small number of placement requests for a different school. This is the decision-making role of the Local Authorities that lead on the placement of pupils through the EHCP.

We are also providing the Evidence for Learning journal every two weeks so that the small steps of learning can build that picture of progress, and can equally inform any questions that may come through your reflections. The Spring Term newsletter also invited families to book a meeting with me if there was anything you wished to discuss.

You are your child's advocate, and we are here to support you with that. We do feel the strength of the partnership with families. Please let us know if you want to speak about anything. You are able to book an appointment at any time by catching us at the school gates or by calling reception on 02076818080.


Sincerely,

Vijita Patel  
Principal

Comment in post and factually accurate context at Swiss Cottage School


"...this being the only special needs school in Camden borough they do not have much choice but to send them here..."

**- Camden LA has multiple special schools. A small group of families are seeking Treehouse Special School or an ABA special school. The Local Authority makes this decision and the Annual Review process informs the outcome. There are numerous special schools across the London local authorities. We have a waiting list of over 80 families seeking a place at Swiss Cottage School.**



**Laila K.**  
Fordwych · 18h

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Hi all, to all parents who fear for their children safety at Swiss Cottage school. (Your children's Safety)

This is a school were so many parents fear for their children safety but this being the only special needs school in Camden borough they do not have much choice but to send them here and keep quite. So many children and members of staff get injured in this school but the school is so good in covering all incidents up. The teachers do not stay very long so expect in one academic year more than one change. The support staff are mostly temporary agency staff so there is no continuity for the children. So many children have lost their independence and skills when transferred to this school. The Swiss Cottage special children do not use the school's swimming pool but is hired out to the private companies like Swimming Nature. What a waste purpose of this establishment and money that should be benefiting Swiss Cottage Special Children.

If you like to speak even anonymously with us about your child in this school regards their safety & etc please send me DM.  
Thank you

“So many children and members of staff get injured in this school but the school is so good in covering all incidents up.”

- **We follow a multi-agency process if a child gets injured at school. This means the school works immediately with NHS health teams onsite, Camden/LA social services, Camden/LA therapies, Camden/LA mental health teams, and more. We also follow the Camden LA process if a staff member gets injured in school and this also involves additional agencies to support a safe return to work.**

“The teachers do not stay very long so expect in one academic year more than one change.”

- **25 of the class / specialist teachers have been at this school since before the pandemic. They joined our team from 2009-2013 and 2014-2017 at the major growth points of the school and have not left the school.**

- **Teacher contracts are within national conditions and there are 3 windows for resignation across an academic year. This year we had 4 teachers move on due to promotions, 2 return to the EU following maternity leave and medical needs, and 1 starting maternity leave. We equally have teachers returning back to the school mid-year following their maternity and paternity leave.**

- **The school has supported teacher training since 2012 which lets us grow teachers through our specialist training programme. We are also highly sought after for teaching positions when recruitment for permanent teaching positions takes place. Our May recruitment process is a positive reflection of this.**

“The support staff are mostly temporary agency staff so there is no continuity for the children.”

- **87 of our teaching assistants are on permanent contracts and the majority of them have been at our school for a number of years. The other 45 teaching assistants are all on a long-term contract through special needs staffing agencies. This means they are within our working hours, induction and training programme, 8:30-9:15 daily staff planning and preparation time, and valued members of our staff team.**

“So many children have lost their independence and skills when transferred to this school.”

- **The school transparently provides your child’s termly Personal Learning Intentions, medium term planning, and small steps of progress through the Evidence for Learning family portal.**

- **The school has put into place a regular cycle of uploads that takes place every two weeks following useful feedback from the Parent Council on the value of the EfL system. 218 out of 260 families are active users of the online ‘Evidence for Learning’ system.**

- **Every child has an ‘Annual Review’ process coordinated by the Local Authority because of the Education, Health, and Care Plan. The half term and end of term progress reviews confirm pupils develop independence and skills.**

“The Swiss Cottage special children do not use the school’s swimming pool but is hired out to the private companies like Swimming Nature.”

- **The hydrotherapy pool is used by pupils during the school day. There is a timetable for the hydrotherapy pool.**

- **Up to 2019 the school had a contract for the use of the hydrotherapy pool after the school day twice a week and on Saturday morning by Swimming Nature and Water Babies. This contract increased funding into the school. The contract with Swimming Nature and Water Babies stopped due to the pandemic in March 2020. This has not restarted. We have not had external use of the hydrotherapy pool since March 2020 due to our school’s safety measures with the pandemic.**