

8th February 2021

Dear Parents, Carers, and Families

I hope this finds you well. I appreciate the questions and comments that have come to us from parents. Thank you for trusting us with your reflections. I am writing to provide details on our strategy to promote staff engagement in the access to vaccinations as a priority group. We qualified for this access alongside other special school provisions in Camden Local Authority due to the role we have with the personal care, intimate care, medical care, and behavioural support for pupils at our school. There are now 70 Local Authorities including special school staff in the priority group access alongside health and social care staff.

- ✓ We held a full staff briefing to share presentations created by Health Advisors for the North London Councils.
- ✓ We have shared the presentation and NHS / Public Health England factsheets with all staff.
- ✓ We have held multiple staff briefings highlighting key information about vaccinations. This is in the form of whole staff and small group sessions, and is ongoing.
- ✓ We have planned individual Q&A sessions on a daily basis, and this is ongoing.
- ✓ We have connected staff with queries to their peers to understand the vaccination process and short-term side effects.
- ✓ We are coordinating a webinar from local health professionals.
- ✓ We have gained access to webinars facilitated by health leads and GPs on vaccination benefits.

There are key themes for staff that are currently not seeking vaccinations at this time through the priority group.

- Underlying health conditions which require clarification from their GPs – these staff are awaiting an appointment to gain this information
- Family planning / maternity timelines
- Questions about the variant's impact on vaccinations

This is optional and we are incredibly fortunate to access this during the priority group stage. We cannot require anybody to take a vaccination but we are working hard to answer questions and build confidence. Staff who do not engage with a vaccination now will still have access during their allocated 'group' vaccination through their GP. We are also not able to disclose if a specific member of staff has opted for a vaccination. At a recent network meeting of special school leaders, it was clear that every special school with access has had lower uptake than anticipated. This is not a situation unique to our school and we still have access to the priority group portal.

We have discussed each of these points at a recent Governing Body meeting (<https://swisscottage.camden.sch.uk/our-school/our-governors/>). The focus of the Senior Team to promote ongoing use of the priority group vaccination has been proactive and relentless. We will continue this because we know the benefits of vaccination to protect this community. We are currently working hard to gain access for transport and school dinner teams. I hope this provides you with clarity and helps reassure you that we continue to do all we can to support our staff and families at this unprecedented time. Thank you for the ongoing support.

Yours Sincerely,

Vijita Patel
Principal