



Hillscourt Education Centre
Rose Hill
Rednal
Birmingham
B45 8RS

NASUWT Scotland
35 Young Street North Lane
Edinburgh
EH2 4JD

Telephone: 0131 226 8480

E-mail: nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk
Website: www.nasuwt.org.uk

General Secretary: Dr Patrick Roach

Date: 8 January 2021

Our Ref: 210108/Swinney J/PR/FC

John Swinney MSP
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

By email: DFMCSE@gov.scot

Dear John,

Coronavirus Vaccine

The NASUWT welcomed the announcement as part of the First Minister's statement to Parliament made earlier this week that the Scottish Government would give consideration to whether teachers and staff working in schools and colleges could be prioritised for vaccination.

The NASUWT believes it is in the national interest for teachers to be given priority in the roll-out of the vaccination programme and that decisions and plans need to be made for this as a matter of urgency.

Such a move is essential both to help protect teachers and their pupils and to allow the country to move to a situation where children can be back in schools, minimising further disruption to their education.

As many teachers and education staff are unable to practice effective social distancing from their pupils and still report difficulties in compliance with other mitigations, teachers are at a high risk of contracting coronavirus. This is of particular concern to staff in special schools and other ASN settings who are facing additional risks which are comparable to those that exist in the provision of health and social care in undertaking their core role of providing learning and care to those young people with the most complex educational needs. The opportunity to stay at home and provide remote learning has never been an option for them and as such they have been put at greater risk throughout the pandemic.

It is right that health and social care staff are prioritised, but whilst teachers are doing everything that is being asked of them, they also deserve the same levels of protection in the face of this highly deadly and highly contagious virus. The NASUWT also believes that ASN teachers and staff must also be identified as a first priority group in any plans for vaccination of the education workforce.

Through the autumn term, we have seen a bad situation getting worse by the day. Now, at the start of 2021, the position is as bad if not worse than it was in March.

The impact on this generation of children and young people should not be underestimated and it is our view that everything that can be done should be done to ensure the safe and sustainable resumption of face to face education for all pupils as quickly as possible. I know you share this view.

Getting schools open again as soon as possible, without further disruption, means not only that lessons need to be learned, but also that credible and sustainable solutions are implemented.

This means that tougher control measures will be needed to ensure workplace safety, together with priority roll out of the Coronavirus vaccines to all frontline education staff in order to minimise further disruption to children's education

I am therefore seeking your confirmation that all teachers and education staff in Scotland will be prioritised for the coronavirus vaccine to save lives and help get children back to school.

We hope that you will give this matter your fullest consideration and support.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Roach', written in a cursive style.

Dr Patrick Roach
General Secretary