



13th April, 2021

Deputy David Cullinane,
Kildare Street,
Dáil Eireann,
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 15446/21

PQ 15446/21 - "To ask the Minister for Health the number of special schools whose staff have been vaccinated and their relationship with the HSE, HSE site or a group (details supplied) is HSE funded; the reason staff at some special schools have been vaccinated but not others despite the staff facing the same behavioural challenges in students; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -David Cullinane"

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to your above Parliamentary Questions which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position:

There are 118 Special Schools in the country. Special schools provide education in an environment which is heavily supported by Healthcare professionals, including, but not limited to, Nurses, Physiotherapists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Psychologists. These schools are mostly under the patronage and governance of Section 38 or 39 providers under the Health Acts and form part of an overall service provision to a very vulnerable group of children with very serious health conditions.

The majority of the staff within these organisations are clearly frontline healthcare workers and were vaccinated on that basis. This also included the healthcare professionals who participate in the Special School classes. In some instances, teaching and SNA staff were also advised inadvertently to register for vaccination and were included in the vaccination programme. In some cases, this was by self-registration on the portal and in others by virtue of lists supplied by the organisations to local HSE services.

As many of the vaccinations were by self-registration and these include both frontline Healthcare workers as well as teachers and SNAs it is not possible to accurately state how many teachers and SNAs have been vaccinated from these settings. However, in most areas of the country, a portion of those staff have been vaccinated.

It has since been clarified that Teachers and SNAs do not form part of the current vaccination cohort at this time. However, it is also clear that this has been a genuine error based on the unique position of these schools within the healthcare family.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Cullinane'.



Office of the Workstream Lead, Vaccination Process & Workforce.

Tel: (045) 988 363

Address: Oak House, Millennium Park, Naas, Kildare, W91KDC2

David Walsh

Workstream Lead Vaccination Process and Workforce