



SCHOOL COMPLETION PROGRAMME POLICY

Patrician Secondary School Fethard

Definition

The School Completion Programme (SCP) is a Department of Education and Science programme that aims to have a significant positive impact on levels of young people's retention in primary and second level schools and on numbers of pupils who successfully complete the Senior Cycle, or equivalent.

Introduction

The Patrician Presentation Secondary School is one of three secondary schools in South Tipperary School Completion Programme which began in May 2007. It is governed by a Local Management Committee comprising of representatives from all three schools and other relevant agencies. It is the duty of the Local Management Committee to devise a collaborative programme of in-school, after school and holiday actions - The Retention Plan - that will prevent early school leaving and support young people with characteristics and behaviours that are indicative of real risk.

Aims of this policy

- To retain young people in the formal education system to completion of the Senior Cycle, or equivalent.
- To improve quality of participation and educational attainment of targeted children and young people in the educational process.
- To bring together all local stakeholders (home, school, youth, community, statutory and voluntary) to tackle early school leaving.
- To offer positive supports towards the prevention of educational disadvantage.
- To encourage young people who have left mainstream education to return to school.
- To influence in a positive way policies relating to the prevention of early school leaving in the education system.

School Mission Statement

“Our mission is to encourage all pupils to reach their potential in a caring and Christian environment.”

It is the policy of this Programme:-

1. To identify students at risk of or experiencing educational disadvantage and to establish their needs. These students will be identified by management of the school, teaching staff, Pastoral care team, HSCL co-ordinator, SCP co-ordinator and any other relevant agencies. Criteria used in referring a student can and do include:
 - Family history of early school leaving /absenteeism;
 - Poor and / or inconsistent attendance;
 - Literacy / numeracy difficulties;
 - Behavioural difficulties;
 - Family circumstances;
 - Member of a minority group;
 - Indication of socio-economic deprivation;
 - Referral from statutory agency;
 - Poor level of academic achievement.

2. To devise a retention plan focussing programme resources in the first instance on the individual young people who are most at risk of early school leaving. Additionally, some strategies may include a wider group (e.g. in the case of sporting and leisure activities) or the entire school population (e.g. where tracking attendance is involved). The programme is based on a **bottom-up approach**. Different supports are offered in each cluster, depending on local needs, in recognition of the fact that local factors can influence early school leaving. Supports provided by the School Completion Programme fall under the following categories:

In school supports

In school supports are delivered during school hours. They are delivered directly to targeted young people at risk of early school leaving or groups including young people at risk of leaving school early.

- Personal development (to provide workshops for students on building self-esteem and other self-development issues).
- Sports/ recreation/ extra curricular activities (Gardening/ Horticulture, Gaelic Football, Soccer, Swimming & Badminton).
- Lunch time leagues (To increase students involvement and happiness in school activities).
- Pastoral Care (Weekly care meetings).

- **Mentoring Programme** (enabling students to develop self-esteem and personal development. To engage with Senior Students to acquire skills to work on a one to one basis with people).
- **Paired reading programme** (To improve literacy skills through promoting reading as a pleasurable pastime).
- **Transition Programme** (To smoothen the transition from primary to post-primary school).
- **Attendance Secretary** (to track attendance and to encourage punctual and regular attendance by students).
- **Attendance monitoring** (Liaise with students, HSCL co-ordinator, NEWB, EWO, Year heads, class teachers, attendance secretary and home regarding student absences).
- **Attendance promotion** (Awards for good attendance record as part of student's awards scheme).
- **Assist with HSCL co-ordinator** in home visitations.

After school supports

After school supports are delivered after school hours. They often focus on the personal and social development of young people. After school supports are directed to targeted young people at risk of early school leaving but a whole-school approach is also utilised.

- **Homework Club** (with food, to support students who need help with their homework and have difficulty keeping up).
- **Socialisation clubs** (extra-curricular activities through the medium of sport to boost social and personal development in young people).

Holiday Supports

Holiday supports are delivered during holiday time. Holiday supports are provided to young people at risk of leaving school early in order to provide a consistent educational experience for them during the holiday period and to foster a deeper sense of attachment to the school.

- Organised activities one day a week for a period where activities may vary from year to year. (Hiking, fishing, soccer blitz, bowling, stone carving workshops and surfing).
3. To work in partnership with community agencies for the benefit of students through the H.S.C.L. Local Committee and wider scheme, Social Services including District nurses, social and family care workers, counselling services, local clubs and associations, local parish structure i.e. Parish priest, curates, etc.
 4. To involve the Parents Association and Board of Management in the ratification of all policies.
 5. To set goals, to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes of retention plan on an ongoing basis.