



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

1st March 2019

Re: Retention Planning Process 2019/20

Dear Chairperson and Coordinator,

As we rapidly approach the last few months of another school year the time for completing the SCP Retention Plan is upon us again. As the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs continues to work through options for reform of SCP Governance Tusla is anxious that SCP projects have funding security for the academic year 2019/2020.

Please find attached the Retention Plan for the School Completion Programme project funding for 2019/2020. The Guidance Notes which are attached will assist the SCP Coordinator and Local Management Committee in completing the Retention Plan. The Guidance Notes have been updated to provide clarity and answers to questions that have been raised by SCP programmes in the past year.

I would also like to take this opportunity to provide clarity again about who the SCP Programme is for and what SCP funding can be used for as there seems to be some misunderstanding based on the questions that have come to Tusla EWS in recent weeks.

Who is SCP For?

The SCP Programme is a programme to support students who are at risk of early school leaving and students of school going age who are not currently attending school.

SCP funds should be used to provide intervention to children and young people under the following three headings:

- (1) Evidence based/evidence informed intervention at universal level to whole class/whole school groups.
 - (2) Brief interventions for 8 weeks or less for students identified as needing an immediate short term SCP led intervention.
 - (3) Targeted interventions to children and young people with significant support needs who have been identified through the SCP Intake Framework. (Only students in this target group need to be processed through the full Intake Framework referral).
- Breakfast, lunch and afterschool activities.

- Emergency/crisis therapeutic interventions (max €5,000 p.a.).

In addition to providing interventions at the three levels outlined above, the following are examples of the types of interventions and activities that SCP funding can also be used for to support children and young people at risk of early school leaving:

- Brief Interventions to respond to emergency or crisis needs.
- School holiday programmes.
- Training for staff.

As well as providing clarity on what SCP funding should be used for I think it would be helpful to outline activities that SCP does not fund.

SCP does not fund:

- Non-SCP related activities for whole class, year groups or whole school groups e.g. music, sports, drama, transport etc.
- Whole School attendance tracking.
- Ongoing therapeutic interventions including counselling that exceed the guidelines (up to €5,000 of SCP funding per year may be used for emergency/crisis situations).
- Literacy or numeracy supports – These DEIS Themes are the role of the school under the DEIS Plan.
- Teaching Curriculum subjects to whole class groups.

The deadline for receipt of applications is Thursday, 18th April 2019 and Tusla would like to have all SCP Programmes in contract by the end of May (before Post-Primary schools close for the academic year). In order to deliver on this commitment this deadline is a non-negotiable to allow adequate time for administrative and financial checks, full appraisal of plans, clarification if any is required and the issuing of contracts.

Appraisals will be carried out the week starting 8th May 2019. Projects will receive feedback and for all plans submitted on time contracts will issue on the week beginning 27th May.

All SCP Retention Plans received will be appraised by the Tusla Educational Welfare Services Management team. In reviewing SCP plans particular consideration will be given to the identification of need through the community, school and individual profiles in the plan and the range of interventions planned by the project to meet these identified needs. The accompanying budget

should clearly indicate the allocation of project resources to meet the identified needs of the project participants.

There are some small but significant changes to the planning template this year to align it to the Intake Framework. Notably SCP participants will no longer be considered as 'priority' or 'risk' but fall into one of three categories for intervention;

- (i) **Target**
- (ii) **Brief Intervention**
- (iii) **Universal**

This is explained in the early paragraphs of this letter and further detail is also available in the attached Guidance Notes.

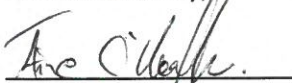
When your plan is being submitted please ensure that you include the following:

- (a) A Hard Copy of the Retention Plan
- (b) The Individuals Profile
- (c) The Budget Application and
- (d) The Governance Statement

Please check that documents are signed by two LMC members. (It is not appropriate for the SCP coordinator to sign on behalf of the LMC).

I look forward to receiving your plan in the coming weeks and commit to maintaining the deadlines as outlined so that SCP Programmes have funding for 2019/2020 signed off before the school summer holidays.

Yours sincerely,



Áine O'Keeffe

National Integrated Services Manager