



Home School Community Liaison Policy

Introduction

It is recognised by the parents, teachers, Board of Management of this school that the parents are the primary educators of the child. Good home-school links contribute greatly to the quality of education received by the child. To establish these links an open, cordial relationship should exist between parents and teachers which recognises and values the respective roles of each.

Goals of HSCL

- To maximise active participation of the children in the learning process in particular those that might be at risk of failure
- To promote active cooperation between home, school and relevant community agencies in promoting the educational interests of the children
- To raise awareness in parents of their own capabilities to enhance their children's educational progress and to assist them in developing relevant skills
- To enhance the children's uptake from education, and their retention in the educational system
- To disseminate the positive outcomes of the scheme throughout the school
- To work with staff to develop an understanding of educational disadvantage and promote innovative approaches and methodologies to address it.

Principles of HSCL

1. The scheme consists of a partnership and collaboration of skills of parents and teachers.
2. The scheme is unified and integrated at both primary and second levels.
3. The thrust of the scheme is preventative rather than curative
4. The focus of the scheme is on the adults whose attitudes and behaviours impinge on the lives of children, namely parents and teachers.
5. The basis of the activities in the scheme is the identification of needs and having those needs met.
6. The scheme develops teacher and staff attitudes in the areas of partnership and whole school approach.
7. The scheme promotes the fostering of self help and independence.
8. Home visitation is a crucial element in establishing bonds of trust with families.
9. HSCL is a full time undertaking

10. The liaison coordinator is an agent of change

11. Community ownership of the scheme is promoted through the development of the local committee

12. Working alongside voluntary and statutory agencies increases the effectiveness of services to marginalised children and their families.

Aims

- To create a school environment where parents and guardians feel welcome and free to discuss their child's progress.
- To encourage parents to become involved in their child's education
- To facilitate a communicative relationship between teachers and parents to the benefit of our pupils
- To encourage the active participation of the parents association in the school, and encourage more parents to become involved
- To work collaboratively with Tusla Education Support Services (TESS), EWS and the School Completion Programme (SCP) to address issues which impinge on the school attendance, participation and retention of children at risk of educational disadvantage and early school leaving
- Liaise with parents of pupils being considered for extra supports through SCP so that these parents understand the supports being offered

Communications

- **Formal parent-teacher meetings** will be held every year, where each parent may have a private meeting with their child's teacher. The meetings will be held during the hours laid down by the DES. Where parents are unable to attend at this time, they are encouraged to make an alternative arrangement with the teacher.
- Information on school activities will be communicated to parents through letters or emails, social media outlets such as school website and facebook and also through text a parent.
- In accordance with the Educational Welfare Act, explanatory notes on pupil **absences** must be communicated to the class teacher after each absence.
- At the teacher's discretion, and subject to the principal's approval, parents may be invited to use their expertise in a particular area to assist the teacher in some classroom-based or extra curricular activities.
- **Home visitation** is the heart of HSCL. The focus is on partnership, building trust, and the image of the friendly face of the school.
- The **parent's room** is available to parents as a warm and welcoming room, where they can attend classes and courses, and also enjoy a cuppa and a chat.
- **Literacy & Mathematics initiatives** are part of HSCL. A variety of initiatives are available. Scoil Eoin will be involved in some of these initiatives such as **Storytime** reading with children, and **Literacy** and **Maths for Fun**. Parents are involved in bringing the initiatives into the classroom. Such projects involve parents in the school interacting with teachers and pupils.

- **Courses and classes** aimed at developing parent's skill will be available throughout the year. A variety of classes can be chosen, such as get fit, healthy cooking, flower arranging, computers, parenting courses, mindfulness, first aid and art. The HSCL co-ordinator in Scoil Eoin can choose along with parents which course or class to carry out.
 - **Transfer support** for parents and children is provided.
- (i) A junior infant pack is presented to the child before entering primary school and information meetings with the parents are held.
- (ii) Transition to secondary level is facilitated by HSCL coordinator through
- organization of visits to local secondary schools for fifth and sixth class pupils
 - visits by the teachers/principals of local secondary schools to fifth and sixth class
 - provision of support for parents of transitioning pupils
 - The school recognizes the benefits of an active **Parents Association**. The school is supportive of activities which are carried out by the parents association. It is a welcome addition to the school. The association communicates with the school through the principal, HSCL co-ordinator and after a parents association general or committee meeting. Parent association support in the provision of resources, financial support and assistance in extra curricular activities is welcome and appreciated.

Support structures for HSCL co-ordinators

There are two types of cluster support groups:

Family cluster

Local cluster

These meetings are attended by other co-ordinators where best practice is discussed, and sharing of ideas takes place.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is important that all partners in the school be aware of the parameters of their own and others' respective roles and responsibilities. The school ethos must be upheld at all times. Consequently, respect for the partners – children, parents, staff and management, must be shown at all times.

Ratified by Board of Management on

Signed:

Chairperson, Board of management