SCHOOL COMPLETION PROGRAMME

Guidance Notes

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Background and Basics

1. The Retention Plan template was substantially revised for 2017/18 in order to simplify the process and enable the EWS to aggregate the data across the programme. For 2018/19 the template remains the same with a few clarifications in some sections.
2. The Retention Plan format requires projects to gather and consider appropriate data and liaise with stakeholders before considering its intended activities for the forthcoming year.
3. The community demographic will require updating based on the latest census data which is now available. The schools cluster demographic and a participant ID number (unique identifier) will also require updating. The unique identifier facilitates an understanding of the level (number) and combination of interventions required, attaches the intervention/s to the young person's needs and enables us to track outcomes for individuals.
4. As in 2017/18 the SCP Target List is weighted and divided between Priority Target Group, Risk Target Group and Universal Interventions.
5. The narrative and analysis required remain the same.
6. The overall plan is structured using a logic model approach to annual planning.
7. The format is designed to:
   o Secure core descriptive information about the intended scope of the project;
   o Provide an indication of the key risk factors experienced by students and project participants within the project's cluster area;
   o Provide an indication of the project's intention and capacity to make improvements.
8. This form is aligned to the core skills and learning in the SCP Continuous Professional Development training provided and training materials should be drawn on in completing the plan.
9. It is the LMCs and project's staff responsibility to ensure that sufficient consultation and research is undertaken to complete the exercise satisfactorily. The LMC will sign off on the Retention Plan prior to submission to Tusla for approval.
10. The draft Plan can be filled in and submitted electronically for approval by EWS, Tusla. Final agreed plans must be signed and submitted in hard copy as per the deadline.
11. The form should assist a project in its own routine performance reviews. It will be important that copies of the signed completed document are retained by the LMC Chair and the SCP Coordinator as a key reference point for project accountability.

Developing your Retention Plan: Considerations

Impact and Outcomes of SCP

The desired **impact** of SCP is retention of a young person to completion of the leaving certificate, equivalent qualification or suitable level of educational attainment which enables them to transition into further education, training or employment.

The three core outcomes of the School Completion Programme are;

1. Improved Attendance
2. Improved Participation
3. Improved Retention

All SCP programmes and interventions must be aligned to the impact and core outcomes of the SCP.

Three Core Outcomes

Each of these outcome areas is crucial to achieving the overall impact of the SCP, however **the majority of the work of the SCP is carried out in relation to Outcome 2: Improved Participation.**

In this context a different weighting is given to each outcome area that SCP operates across as we know that once Outcome 2: Improved Participation is being achieved then Outcome 1: Improved Attendance and Outcome 3: Improved Retention are impacted positively. The suggested weighting for 2016/17 is that the Project focus **60% of the project capacity on interventions relating to Outcome 2: Improved Participation.** Interventions focusing on **Outcome 1: Improved Attendance should be approximately 15% of project capacity** as there are limited interventions SCP can directly provide relating to this outcome.

As outlined above, attendance will be improved if participation is improved, with some issues like punctuality and days absent without leave to be worked on jointly with the school, HSCL and parents/caregivers. The development and implementation by the schools of an Attendance Strategy is a key intervention supporting improved attendance.

Finally, **25% of the project capacity should be spent on Outcome 3: Improved Retention**, in particular, transitions which require interventions at specific times of the year which again complement and reinforce the on-going interventions provided to address needs in relation to participation.

In completing your retention plan you must reflect how project capacity will be utilised to achieve the weightings outlined above.

Targeting your Interventions

The SCP must identify those most 'at risk' of early school-leaving using known risk factors and evidence of attendance rates provided by the school. From this group it must be determined who the project considers to be in the Priority Target Group and who is in the Risk Target Group. The project must also consider who the available intervention can impact on and who might not be suitable for inclusion in the project. The Project must aim to provide a range of supports to them in school and in the community. Where a young person is not in full-time education, the SCP plays a critical role in supporting and encouraging their continuing engagement with education.

Priority Target Group

The Priority Target group require a range of interventions provided through the SCP to meet their identified needs and to maintain their attendance, participation and retention in the school setting. For example a child or young person may be engaged in a personal development group, an individual session in relation to anger management, literacy support and a breakfast club.

Risk Target Group

The Risk Target Group may require a brief specific purpose, time-limited interventions or an on-going low level intervention to maintain their attendance participation and retention in the school setting. For example a child or young person might be engaged in a homework club four days per week or engaged in a personal development group one day per week.

Targeting must be done and evidenced in conjunction with the school and the HSCL coordinator ensuring that any young people that are on an EWO list are also on the SCP target list.

SCP must assess the needs of each individual targeted young person and deliver interventions which support the skills development and behaviour change required to achieve the core outcomes of the Programme.

Additional external supports required in relation to the assessed needs of the young person should be planned collaboratively with local child and family related services to ensure consistency in approach and to avoid duplication of service and support to individual young people.

Attendance and retention will be improved by strengthening engagement and participation in the following ways:

- Providing evidence-based interventions to support the development of social and emotional literacy;
- Strengthening transitions throughout a child's education by addressing specific needs as they arise to enable progression from one school year to the next ;Identifying barriers to participation and implementing responses or interventions to overcome such barriers collaboratively with the school and wider community services as required;
- Providing academic or social-emotional coaching and mentoring when needed.

These are delivered in the following settings:

1. Primary School
2. Post-Primary School
3. Non-school/Not in full-time Education

and through engaging young people at the following times:

1. in school
2. after school
3. and during school holidays

NOTE: Your plan must address provision in all settings and at all times

Technical Hints

File Naming

Please make sure when you save your submission files, that they are renamed with your project name at the start. I.e. replace the handler *[[YourProjectName]]* with your project name.

Form entries font

Your form entries are pre-set to format to Verdana size 9. This will facilitate the best use of the form layout (for example the tables and text boxes).

Adding new rows to a table

If you want to add more lines to a form table (for example 1.2 Staff Profile and Contacts), then simply use the tab key at the end of the table to create a new row at the bottom of the table.

Max Word and text box sizes

Where a text box is presented with a max word count indicated, please do not increase the size of these text boxes.

SECTION 1 // PROJECT INFORMATION

1.1 Project Details

Please give complete contact details for the SCP.

1.2 Staff Profile and Contacts

Please list all staff paid by the project: full-time, part-time and sessional.

For sessional staff those who did not take part in CPD or who are administrative we do not require an email address or contact number.

You can extend this table, if you need more rows.

1.3 School Details

Please list details for all schools in the SCP cluster. You can extend this table, if you need more rows.

SECTION 2 // DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

2.1 Community Profile

(Max 500 words.)
This is your opportunity to give context for the communities that you're working in.

Please identify the county/ies, town/s, Dublin city codes, city areas, village/s, etc. your project provides a service to. Name all that apply.

If your project serves a number of discrete catchment areas please specify these areas (for example you might choose to name an urban estate).

Please set out the local statistic demographics and metrics. These local statistics build a picture of the factors affecting ESL in your area, and inform your project targeting choices.

You must give statistics under the following headings:

- Youth population (number and percentage)
- Number of single parent households
- Average level of educational attainment
- Percentage Transfer to 3rd level
- Percentage Unemployment Rate

Please also include one to two other demographics relevant to your area of your choosing e.g. traveller population.

You can source these statistics using

- www.pobal.ie
- www.cso.ie
- Cluster Schools DEIS submission,
- County/City council and/or local Leader/Partnership companies

Please make a brief statement of what this demographic means to your communities, schools and participants.

2.2 Profile of Schools in this Cluster

All statistics given should be based on figures for the previous academic year 2016/17.

- **Enrolment**
  (as per October Return 2017)
- **Attendance submitted**
  Has the school submitted their Attendance Strategy to Tusla?
- **Students Suspended**
  This is the total Number of Students Suspended
- **Suspension Incidences**
  Total No of incidence of Suspension
- **Days lost to suspension**
  The Total number of Days lost to suspension
- **Students on Reduced Timetable**
  The total number of Students on Reduced Timetable
- **Total Target Group**
  add total of Priority and Risk Target Groups for 2018 / 2019

School closure or amalgamation

If there has been, in the previous academic year 2016/17 (or if any are planned), a school closure or amalgamation in your SCP Project schools cluster, then please give details in the box.

2.3 Individuals Profile (attached appendix file)

Please complete *SCP RP 2018/19 Individuals Profile (Appendix 1),* an excel file to be renamed with your project name at the start and included in your submission.

This is an analysis of the students from the cluster/catchment area who have been referred by the project and screened for inclusion.

Please list all Priority Target Group members first, followed by all Risk Target Group members.

Priority Target Group

The Priority Target group require a range of interventions provided through the SCP to meet their identified needs and to maintain their attendance, participation and retention in the school setting. For example a child or young person may be engaged in a personal development group, an individual session in relation to anger management, literacy support and a breakfast club.

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- **Project**
  The SCP Project Name.

- **ID Number**
  Please provide an ID Number (anonymised unique identifier) for each young person using the following format: A Sequential Number per year e.g. Cabra/2014/01, Cabra/2014/02, Cabra/2015/01, Cabra/2015/02, Cabra/2016/01; Cabra/2016/02, Cabra 2016/03, and so on.

- **Ethnic / Cultural Backgrounds**
  For post-primary participants, please take this data from the P-POD system. For primary participants you should endeavour to allow participants to self identify.

- **Date of initial Engagement**
  The Year the Participant was first engaged by the Project.

- **No. of days absent**
  Total number of days absent from school within previous academic year or the number of days absent from school without permission (i.e. sick cert etc.)?

- **No. of unique suspensions**
  The number of times a child / young person has been suspended within the previous academic year.

- **Total No. of days suspended**
  The total cumulative number of days a child / young person has been absent from school as a result of suspension.

- **Is / has been on a reduced timetable**
  Has the child / young person been on a reduced timetable during the previous academic year. If so, please state number of days / weeks on reduced timetable.

- **Did transfer**
  Did this child / young person transfer (i.e. from primary to post primary, from 2nd year to 3rd year, from Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle etc.).

- **Expulsion**
  Has this child / young person been expelled from school?

- **School Refusing Behaviour**
  This may be diagnosed and undiagnosed.

2.4   Projected levels of Participant Engagement

Based on engagement in previous years give considered estimates for numbers to be engaged by the SCP in 2016/17 and an indication of the project capacity dedicated to the priority and risk target groups.

SECTION 3 // THE PROJECT STORY

For each of the sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 please consider the following questions:

- What is the project story in the context of the demographic detail in the previous section?
- In the context of the community, the school and the individual student needs what is the project plan to respond and why?
- What does success look like for the project?

Tie together and link the needs and draw your own professional conclusions on what the focus of the work of your SCP should be on this basis. Be succinct but do not use bullet points.

SECTION 4 // ANNUAL LOGIC MODEL

Provide an Annual Logic model for your project. This should be no longer than one page, with an absolute maximum of two pages.

SECTION 5 // LOGIC MODEL OUTCOMES & OUTPUTS

To complete these sections you should copy and paste the Outputs Section from your Project Annual Logic Model into these three sections.

Please give a short description of your planned interventions and a supporting statement for each intervention outlining how and why you believe each will lead to the short/medium term outcomes you are seeking.

Give the rationale for each activity. This should correspond with the Programme Logic Models you will developed at project level and it should be easy to link the community, school, participant demographics and identified needs to the desired outcomes and understand how the chosen intervention will achieve these outcomes.

Please include proposed length of intervention, number of sessions, type and number of participants and any other additional measurable information.

SECTION 6 //INTERAGENCY/COLLABORATION/REFERRAL

6.1 Interventions Provided Indirectly

Please give a short description of planned interventions which the SCP does not directly provide **but does fund** e.g. summer programmes where SCP participants are referred and SCP funding is allocated but no SCP staff are involved directly in the provision of the intervention.

Please list the intervention, identify the provider and state the amount of funding allocated by the SCP project.

6.2 Interventions Provided by Referral

Please give a short description of planned interventions which the SCP does not directly provide but where the young people are referred and supported by the SCP to attend, **funding is allocated but no SCP staff are involved** directly in the provision of the intervention.

Please identify the provider and please state the funding allocated by/the cost to your SCP project.

6.3   Local, Regional, National Committee Representation
Please list all committees on which the SCP staff are members specifying Coordinator or Project Worker.

6.4   Interagency
Please list all interagency work undertaken by the project e.g. Meitheal, PPFS in the last 12 months and specify the role of the SCP staff in the work.

6.5   Unmet Risks and Needs
Please give an outline of risks and needs identified which the project does not have the capacity or particular expertise to address.

6.6   Other
Please list any other areas of work to be undertaken by the project that have not yet been included in this plan.

SECTION 7 // BUDGET AND APPROVAL

Please note the three excel workbook sheets:

- Income and Expenditure (coloured yellow)
- Other Income (coloured blue)
- Intervention Cost Summary (coloured green)

7.1   Budget Application 2018/19
Complete Appendix 2 in full and submitt with the overall Rentnion Plan.

Note 1 – Surplus/Deficit Balance @ 31.08.2017 Box)
Include in the "**Surplus/Deficit balance at 31.08.2017**" box any unallocated SCP monies at your projects academic year end (You will find this figure in your projects May-August 2016 financial return, bottom right hand side of front summary sheet).

The figures goes under the "**Retention Plan 2017/2018**" column and the adjacent column "**Budget Projection 2018/2019**" will remain blank.

Note 2 – SCP Grant Funded by Tusla)
Include in the "**Retention Plan 2017/2018**" column your approved SCP funding allocation figure for the academic year 2016/2017.

Include in "**Budget Projection 2018/2019**" column your projects approved SCP funding allocation figure for the academic year 2016/2017 (same figure as per paragraph above).

Note 3 – Other Funding
Include in the "**Retention Plan 2017/2018**" column your total for funding from other sources figure as per your retention plan 2016/2017. (Please provide a breakdown of your total funding from other sources figure, in table 13 named "**Other income breakdown**".

Include in "**Budget Projection 2018/2019**" column your total of budgeted funding from other sources figure for the academic year 2018/2019. Please provide a breakdown of your total funding from other sources figure in table 13 named **"Other income breakdown".**

Note 4 – Employment Costs

Include all salary costs (Gross pay and employers PRSI) in relation to the coordinator, project staff, sessional staff, secretarial staff and attendance monitor.

Note 5 – Capital Outlay & Equipment Costs

Include expenditure of a capital nature and the purchase of new equipment

Capital outlay- examples of capital outlay might include extensions or material refurbishments to buildings.

New equipment –examples of new equipment might include furniture, computers, printers, laptops, class equipment.

Note 6 – Administration charges

Include here administration charges from Education Training Boards and Education Centres only.

Note 7 – Other Administration (Please specify in rows below)

Include in the blank rows below "**other**" all other expenditure which has not already been categorised in the budget table. Please insert additional rows if required.

Note 8 – Contractors Costs

Include invoiced amounts from contractors, exclude all contractors in relation to transport, as these will be included in the transport row of intervention costs.

Examples of contractors may include coaches, counselling services.

Note 9 - Food

Include food costs paid out of the School Completion Programme Budget, exclude foods costs funded by the Department of Social Protection (school meals).

Note 10 – Other Intervention Costs (Please specify in rows below)

Please refer to note 7 above

7.2   Approval and Sign-off of the Retention Plan

A signed hard copy of the approved rentention plan must be submitted before a contract can issue.

SECTION 8 // LOCAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

8.1   Schedule of Meetings

Please give the proposed schedule of LMC meetings in 2018/19

8.2   Membership

Please list all current participating members of your LMC.

SECTION 9 // COMPLIANCE

9.1 Governance

SCP projects are mandated to establish a Local Management Committee (LMC). It is the responsibility of the Local Management Committee to oversee the delivery of a programme of activity to marginalised children and their families as a response to early school-leaving and to be accountable for all decisions made in respect of that programme.

A hard copy of the Governance Statement must be signed and returned with your retention plan. See appendix 1.

9.2 Continuous Professional Development

Tick all that have been fully completed by each SCP staff person in any year previous (applicable to all staff who have completed CPD and have a scp.ie email address).

9.3 Child Protection

Delete *Yes / No* as appropriate.

9.4 Data Protection

Delete *Yes / No* as appropriate.

9.5 Financial Returns

Delete *Yes / No* as appropriate.