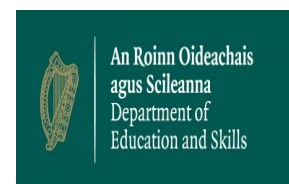




## Information Booklet for DEIS schools participating in the Home School Community Liaison Scheme

*“It is clear from the Irish experience that educational initiatives based in schools can raise the educational level of the adults involved, and result in a general sense of empowerment in the local community. Parental involvement, especially in areas of socio-economic deprivation, does not just benefit the children and the school - it is a crucial aspect of lifelong learning.”*  
**Parents as Partners in Schooling, OECD 1997**

March, 2019



## Table of Contents

Information Booklet for DEIS schools participating in the Home School Community Liaison Scheme .....	1
1. Context of the HSCL Scheme .....	3
1.1 Establishment of the HSCL Scheme .....	3
1.2 The HSCL Scheme and Tusla Educational Welfare Service .....	3
1.4 Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) and HSCL .....	4
1.5 Research on DEIS and HSCL Scheme .....	5
2. Vision and Values of the HSCL Scheme .....	6
2.1 Vision and Values of HSCL .....	6
2.2 Attributes of the HSCL Coordinator .....	7
3. Working as a HSCL Coordinator .....	8
3.1 Assignment of HSCL Coordinators .....	8
3.2 Role of the HSCL Coordinator .....	9
3.3 HSCL Scheme - Key Priorities .....	9
3.4 DEIS Planning Requirements and the HSCL Coordinator .....	11
3.5 Managing the HSCL Annual Grant .....	12
4. What supports are available to HSCL Coordinators? .....	13
4.1 Continuous Professional Development .....	13
4.2 HSCL Family/ Local Cluster Meetings .....	13
4.3 Tusla EWS Management Team .....	14
4.4 HSCL National Administration Office .....	14
4.5 Social Inclusion Unit .....	15
4.6 Useful Publications .....	15
Appendix .....	17
HSCL Grants to Schools .....	17
Financial support to schools as an alternative to services of HSCL Coordinator post .....	18
Appendix (page 1 of 5) .....	19
Appendix (page 2 of 5) .....	20
Appendix (page 3 of 5) .....	21
Appendix (page 4 of 5) .....	22
Appendix (page 5 of 5) .....	23

- *This Information Booklet is available on the Department of Education and Skills website at [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) and also on the Tusla website at [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)*
- *In this document the word 'parent' also denotes 'guardian'.*



# 1. Context of the HSCL Scheme

## 1.1 Establishment of the HSCL Scheme

“The underlying policy of the Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) Scheme is one that seeks to promote partnership between parents and teachers. The purpose of this partnership is to enhance pupils’ learning opportunities and to promote their retention in the education system. In addition, the HSCL Scheme places great emphasis on collaboration with the local community. The HSCL Scheme is the pioneer in involving the school in the life of the community and involving the community and its agencies in the life of the school.”

*(From Vision to Best Practice, 2005)*

The HSCL Scheme was initiated as a pilot project in 1990. It was designed as a result of a review carried out on the Disadvantaged Areas Scheme, a scheme introduced in 1984, which provided additional funding to primary schools in disadvantaged areas. The HSCL Scheme was initially a three year pilot scheme, which involved the appointment of thirty teachers as HSCL Coordinators, in fifty five selected primary schools included in the Disadvantaged Areas Scheme at the time. It was extended in 1991 to a further 13 post primary schools, that served the children from the original selected primary schools. The three year pilot phase of the HSCL Scheme ended in June 1993. All disadvantaged primary and post primary schools in the Disadvantaged Areas Scheme were offered a Home School Community Liaison service from September 1999. The HSCL Scheme was extended in 2005 and again in 2017 under DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools).

## 1.2 The HSCL Scheme and Tusla Educational Welfare Service

On January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014, the statutory functions of the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, were transferred to the newly established Tusla Child and Family Agency. Operational responsibility for the HSCL scheme is under the remit of Tusla Educational Welfare Services (EWS). The Department of Education and Skills remains responsible for the funding and allocation of HSCL Coordinators to schools. The HSCL Scheme, School Completion Programme (SCP) and the statutory Educational Welfare Service (EWS) are committed to working in a coherent and integrated way to secure better educational outcomes for children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage and to maximise attendance, participation and retention of all students.

An integrated services model, incorporating the work of its three service strands, (statutory EWS, HSCL & SCP) is at an extremely well advanced stage of development. The aim and rationale of an integrated services strategy for Tusla Educational Welfare Services is:

- To provide more effective service delivery, through appropriate intervention, for children who have difficulties in relation to school attendance, participation and retention
- To foster and develop improved engagement with other agencies and services working with children and families, and

- To influence more effective policy-making with an increased emphasis on planning, outcome measurement and the gathering of evidence on the impact of interventions.

The integrated services model is designed to facilitate standardisation of service delivery, fully acknowledging and accommodating the particular functions and contributions of each strand, whilst also taking into consideration the need for flexibility around interventions between and across the strands, given the unique nature of difficulties presenting in individual children’s lives. Through the integration of the three service strands, Tusla EWS is determined to provide excellent services to children, families and schools through an integrated service delivery approach.

#### **1.4 Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) and HSCL**

DEIS is grounded in the belief that every child and young person deserves an equal chance to access, participate in and benefit from education, that each person should have the opportunity to reach her/his full educational potential for personal, social and economic reasons, and that education is a critical factor in promoting social inclusion and economic development. Launched in 2005 by the Department of Education and Skills, DEIS is aimed at addressing the educational needs of children and young people from disadvantaged communities. The DEIS frame of reference is based on the definition of “educational disadvantage” in the Education Act (1998) as:

*‘The impediments to education arising from social or economic disadvantage which prevent students from deriving appropriate benefit from education in schools’.*

DEIS focuses on addressing and prioritising the educational needs of children and young people from disadvantaged communities, from pre-school through second-level education (3 to 18 years), through the School Support Programme, which includes a suite of interventions comprising in-school and out-of-school supports. These supports include enhanced teaching resources in schools with the highest levels of disadvantage; additional financial resources for all DEIS schools; access to literacy and numeracy supports; curricular supports; planning and professional development supports, wellbeing support and transfer programmes from early years to primary, primary to post primary and from post primary to further and higher education, training or employment. In addition, the School Support Programme includes two major interventions, namely, the HSCL Scheme and the School Completion Programme (SCP). All DEIS Urban Primary and DEIS Post Primary schools are currently included in the HSCL Scheme.

The DEIS Plan 2017 sets out the Department of Education and Skill’s vision for education to more fully become a proven pathway to better opportunities for those in communities at risk of disadvantage and social exclusion. The DEIS initiative is designed to ensure that the most disadvantaged schools benefit from a comprehensive package of supports, while ensuring that others continue to receive support in line with the level of disadvantage among their pupils. The DEIS Strategy is an integrated educational response to implementing a whole range of Government measures to address social and educational inclusion. The HSCL Scheme is funded through the Department of Education and Skills.

DEIS Plan 2017 was published in February 2017 and can be found at <http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/DEIS-Delivering-Equality-of-Opportunity-in-Schools/> Central to the success of the DEIS Plan is an increased emphasis on planning at school and school cluster level, target-setting and measurement of progress and outcomes, to ensure that the increased investment is matched by an improvement in educational outcomes for the children and young people concerned.

It is based on 5 Key Goals:

1. The implementation of a more robust and responsive assessment framework for the identification of schools and effective resource allocation
2. To improve the learning experience and outcomes of pupils in DEIS schools
3. To improve the capacity of school leaders and teachers to engage, plan and deploy resources to their best advantage
4. To support and foster best practice in schools through inter-agency collaboration

5. To support the work of schools by providing the research, information, evaluation and feedback to achieve the goals of the Plan

The primary role of the HSCL coordinator is to work with the salient adult(s) in the child's life, in order to improve educational outcomes for the child. The focus of the role is to improve the attendance, participation and retention of children in the Irish educational system, by providing both universal and targeted supports.

### 1.5 Research on DEIS and HSCL Scheme

Three reports arising from research in DEIS schools, undertaken separately and independently by the Educational Research Centre (ERC) and the Department's Inspectorate in recent years<sup>1</sup>, have concluded that there is clear evidence that the DEIS programme is having a positive effect on tackling educational disadvantage.

The ERC report on the Evaluation of DEIS: Monitoring achievement and attitudes among urban primary school pupils from 2007 to 2016 found clear evidence that achievement in reading and mathematics in sample DEIS urban primary schools was higher in 2016 than in 2007. The difference was statistically significant and was found at all grade levels. Pupils also reported more favourable attitudes to school than at any other year of testing. In terms of the provision of activities for parents, the reports from both the ERC and the Department's Inspectorate confirm that schools are extremely conscious of the importance of positive school-parental linkages.

- Both the ERC and the Department's Inspectorate reports confirm that primary schools are maintaining and continuing to provide activities for parents, including activities that are related to their children's learning.
- At post primary level, the Department's Inspectorate evaluation findings point to positive engagement by schools, in implementing interventions to improve partnership with parents and the community.

Evaluations carried out by the Educational Research Centre (ERC) on the HSCL Scheme include the following:

- Archer, P. & Shortt, F. (2003), *Review of the Home-School-Community Liaison Scheme - Report to the Department of Education and Science*, Educational Research Centre, [www.erc.ie](http://www.erc.ie)
- ERC (1994), *The Home-School-Community Liaison Scheme - Final Evaluation Report*, Educational Research Centre, [www.erc.ie](http://www.erc.ie)

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<sup>1</sup>The evaluation of DEIS: Monitoring achievement and attitudes among urban primary school pupils from 2007 to 2016; Lauren Kavangh, Susan Weir and Eva Moran, ERC; [www.erc.ie](http://www.erc.ie)  
*Looking at Action Planning for Improvement in DEIS Primary Schools*, Department's Inspectorate, DES, 2015 [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)  
*Looking at Action Planning for Improvement in DEIS Post Primary Schools*, Department's Inspectorate, DES, 2015 [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)



## 2. Vision and Values of the HSCL Scheme

### 2.1 Vision and Values of HSCL

- **HSCL is a full-time undertaking. HSCL Coordinators are released from all teaching duties and engage in full-time liaison work between the home, the school, and the community. Under no circumstances, can a HSCL Coordinator be timetabled for teaching duties in the school.**
- The focus of the scheme is principally on the salient adults, whose attitudes and behaviours impinge on the attendance, participation and retention of children in education. This involves the identification of and response to needs, through a set of interventions, which are evidence- based.
- The scheme operates in a spirit of partnership and collaboration with parents and teachers, while at the same time, being part of an ongoing and wider integrated services approach to children's educational welfare.
- The scheme is unified and integrated at both primary and post primary levels.
- The thrust of the scheme is preventative, ensuring that interventions are put in place, which will impact positively on parents and children, in order to improve educational outcomes.
- The scheme helps to develop and promote teacher and staff attitudes to partnership. It encourages a whole-school approach to improving attendance, participation and retention in education.
- The scheme is solution-focused, building on the strengths of parents and carers through empowerment and capacity-building.
- The scheme supports families as their children transition from early years to primary, primary to post-primary and post-primary to further and higher education, training or employment.
- Visiting families in their home setting is a crucial element in establishing trust, assessing needs, and monitoring the effect of plans and interventions put in place to bring about improved outcomes for children.
- Partnership with the two other service strands, within Educational Welfare Services, of the Child and Family Agency, other relevant support services and voluntary and statutory agencies is essential to increasing effectiveness, reducing duplication and providing an integrated delivery of service to marginalised children and their families.

- The HSCL Coordinator is required to link with and work with the key actors in the local community, such as Local Community Development Committees and Children and Young People’s Services Committees and others, so that they can add value to what is done in the school, in relation to attendance, participation and retention.
- The HSCL Coordinator is an agent of change, not only for individuals and families but also for schools and the wider educational system.

In summary, the HSCL Scheme:

- Targets children at risk of not fully attending, participating or being retained within the formal educational system because of many home, school, community and other issues, which adversely affect pupil attainment and school retention.
- Focuses directly on the significant adults in children’s lives and seeks direct benefits for the children themselves.
- Works in an enabling way with parents to develop their capacity as a key resource in their children’s learning.
- Develops the pupil-parent-teacher relationship, so that school becomes a place where all young people can reach their potential.
- Identifies and provides for the personal, leisure and learning needs of parents, so as to promote their self-worth and self-confidence, which will have a positive impact on their children’s education.
- Becomes familiar with attendance patterns, in order to maximize student attendance, participation and retention.
- Works in a supportive and purposeful way with parents and facilitates communication with class teacher, tutor, year-head, and school management, when required.
- Promotes positive teacher and staff attitudes towards partnership-working and adopting a whole-school approach to attendance participation and retention.

## 2.2 Attributes of the HSCL Coordinator

*‘Key to the ongoing success of the HSCL Scheme is the selfless dedication of the HSCL personnel. Coordinators act not only as liaison between the schools, teachers, parents and communities but also act as advocates of partnership and collaboration as well as drivers of the range of activities that the scheme supports’.*

Mary Hanafin, Minister for Education and Science, 2005.

- HSCL Coordinators shall:
- √ Have a commitment to supporting parents to enable children to develop to their full potential.
  - √ Have a commitment to parents developing their potential as the primary educators of their children.

- √ Have the ability and willingness to forge positive professional relationships with parents, pupils, Principal(s), staff and relevant stakeholders, in order to make a positive difference to a child's experience of school.
- √ Remain up to date with evidence-based research on what works, in a given context, to help children attend, participate in learning and be retained in the system.
- √ Have the ability to understand the needs of, and difficulties faced by marginalised families and communities and be able to put plans in place to respond to those needs.
- √ Have the ability to work in an interagency and inter-disciplinary way.
- √ Have the ability to monitor the impact of the interventions put in place to support parents and children and to demonstrate improved outcomes.
- √ Have the ability to lead and build staff capacity.



### 3. Working as a HSCL Coordinator

#### 3.1 Assignment of HSCL Coordinators



The Department of Education and Skills Circular 0016/2019 titled **Assignment of Home School Community Liaison Coordinators within DEIS schools** informs all DEIS Urban Primary and Post Primary school management and staff regarding the process for assigning teachers as HSCL Coordinators and the EWS Integrated Services Management Team and reporting arrangements in DEIS schools. The circular also outlines the attributes required and job description/role of the HSCL Coordinator post. This circular is available on the Department's website at [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

*A teacher is assigned to the post of HSCL Coordinator for a maximum of 5 years. All assignments are subject to the HSCL allocation to the school(s) by the Department.*

### **3.2 Role of the HSCL Coordinator**

In line with the vision and values of the HSCL scheme within Tusla EWS and Circular 0016/2019, the HSCL Coordinator shall:

The HSCL Coordinator shall:

- Encourage, support and facilitate partnership between parents and teachers to enhance the education of children.
- Spend a minimum of one third of their time on visiting the homes of pupils in order to:
  - Build bonds of trust between home and school.
  - Encourage parents to become involved in their child's education.
  - Bring information about the school and about services available in the community.
  - Seek out potential parent leaders, who are willing to participate in the HSCL Scheme's activities and to be a resource to other parents.
  - Monitor the effectiveness of interventions, which have been put in place.
- Work with staff to develop an understanding of educational disadvantage and promote innovative approaches and methodologies to address it.
- Actively develop and promote parental involvement as an integral part of the school development/DEIS planning process and in their work, to support the development, implementation and review of the Action Plan for Improvement.
- Establish structures to identify the needs of parents.
- Work with parents to prepare and support them as a resource to their own children and also to the wider school community.
- Support the establishment and further development of links between early years' settings, parents, families, schools and communities to support children across the education continuum
- Support measures to improve attendance, participation and retention of Travellers, Roma and other pupils at particular risk of poor engagement with education and early school leaving.

- Work collaboratively with the Tusla 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, why they are being offered and to ensure that parental consent is given.
- Support successful transitions from early childhood care and education to primary, primary to post primary and post primary to further and higher education. HSCL will play a key role in engaging with other key actors to support transitions and ensure pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are fully supported.
- Facilitate the provision of leisure, curricular, parenting and personal development programmes for parents.
- Participate in, contribute to and support integrated services policy and practice of the Tusla EWS.
- Formally engage with adult and family literacy services and establish and maintain appropriate structures to facilitate the involvement of parents in their child's learning in school and in the home in areas such as literacy, numeracy, leisure/curricular courses, personal development, parenting, shared reading etc.
- Facilitate the training of parents as community leaders and as a support to other parents.
- Establish and maintain links with other schools and engage with Local Community Development Committees and Children and Young People Services Committees structures to build on existing structures and expertise, avoid duplication of provision and make linkages to help pupils and parents engage in community activities.
- Facilitate partnership with teachers, parents, pupils and community agencies in formulating school policies.
- Establish/maintain/participate in the Local Education Committee which seeks to respond to school-related issues at community level, that impinge on learning, and to seek to address these issues, by working collaboratively with parents, pupils, voluntary and statutory agencies.
- Where appropriate, schools can initiate or engage in a 'Meitheal', the practice model for Tusla Family Support Service, in order to access additional support for children and families through collaboration with community agencies.
- Plan, monitor and evaluate HSCL interventions and programmes through:
  - a. Together with the school Principal, producing an annual HSCL plan with specified targets
  - b. Together with the school Principal, producing a weekly HSCL timetable
  - c. Recording all significant contact with families and prioritising home visitation
  - d. Completing a HSCL Return Form in relation to (a) Expenditure and (b) Objectives, Targets, Activities and Outcomes under HSCL Scheme.

### 3.3 HSCL Scheme - Key Priorities

- The HSCL scheme is targeted and focused on the most marginalised families.
- Home visitation is a central component of the scheme:

*The home visit is crucial to developing empathy with families in their efforts to engage with the education system. It essentially builds a bridge between the home and the school. Information about the school and other services in the community is offered, and in turn, parents' views and opinions are invaluable to the school. The visit is a two-way journey, where bonds of trust are built, in a spirit of mutual respect and support. The partnership of parent and school is crucial and enriches the child's engagement with learning'.*

(From Vision to Best Practice, 2005).

- HSCL Coordinators spend at least 33% of their work time on home visitation, in order to establish positive relationships between home and school and to support parents in ensuring their children attend school and participate meaningfully in education.
- Individual parents are supported with their children's learning through the work of the HSCL Coordinator.
- HSCL Coordinators facilitate courses and classes for parents to help them support their own and their children's learning. The provision of a Parents' Room or dedicated space facilitates this and effectively, the school becomes a centre of welcome, where parents enjoy the hospitality of other parents in a warm and cheerful atmosphere, situated within their child's school.
- Each HSCL Coordinator devises and promotes new methodologies and practices to counter educational disadvantage.
- Each HSCL Coordinator works in an integrated way with their SCP and statutory EWS colleagues through the SCP Intake Framework and EWS referral system.
- Each HSCL Coordinator works to build on the capacity of parents to support other parents.
- Each HSCL Coordinator will produce plans incorporating targets, to meet the key priorities of the HSCL Scheme, in accordance with strategic direction of Educational Welfare Services in the Child and Family Agency.
- The positive outcomes of the HSCL scheme are recorded and shared throughout the school system.

### 3.4 DEIS Planning Requirements and the HSCL Coordinator

Schools that receive additional support and resources through participation in DEIS are expected to support the DEIS Plan through a systematic planning and monitoring process at individual school level and at school/cluster/community level. The involvement of students, parents, local communities and agencies operating at local level is considered an important dimension of the planning process. Schools are expected to develop Action Plan for Improvement focussing on the following themes:

1. Attendance
2. Retention

3. Transitions
4. Literacy
5. Numeracy
6. Partnership with parents and other
7. Wellbeing
8. Examination attainment (at post primary)

The HSCL Coordinator plays a critical role in supporting the development, implementation, evaluation and review of the school's Action Plan for Improvement, particularly in the promotion of parental involvement. The HSCL Coordinator should also develop an annual plan which reflects the school's priority areas under DEIS and work in partnership with school staff and parents to achieve the targets, as set out by the Deis Plan for Improvement. Progress in the implementation of these Action Plans should be kept under review and adjusted in light of experience. Evaluations of Action Planning for Improvement in DEIS Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Inspectorate, DES 2015) are available at [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

### **3.5 Managing the HSCL Annual Grant**

A minimum of 10% of a school's DEIS budget is to be allocated to HSCL activities. Schools are accountable to the DES Social Inclusion Unit for this expenditure. All expenditure must be recorded on the standardized expenditure form and returned to the DES at the end of each academic year (see appendix). Receipts of all items purchased for HSCL activities must be kept by the HSCL Coordinator and may be required in the event of an audit. DES guidance is included in the appendix. HSCL coordinators are entitled to travel and subsistence in accordance with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform regulations. Rates are also available in the appendix.



## 4. What supports are available to HSCL Coordinators?

### 4.1 Continuous Professional Development

Training is provided to all HSCL coordinators upon commencement in the role, and in line with the needs of the HSCL scheme and Tusla EWS, so that they will be adequately equipped to undertake their duties and responsibilities, effectively, confidently and efficiently. In the first instance, it is a requirement that all HSCL Coordinators attend all CPD, provided by Tusla, during their tenure of the HSCL post. This includes attendance at all days of induction training, generally held in October and March of the first year of taking up the HSCL position. This training is organised and delivered by the EWS Integrated Services Team of TUSLA Education Welfare Services, assisted by experienced HSCL practitioners, utilising best practice and evidence-based methodologies. Permission of the School Principal/school management should be obtained prior to enrolling for HSCL induction training. HSCL Coordinators are also required, with the permission of school management, to attend any integrated training, provided by TUSLA, for the three strands of the Educational Welfare Services.

Schools are reminded that training courses are occasionally offered by Tusla and other providers, on a regional basis, free of charge to professionals, working with children and families. Before enrolling for such courses, HSCL Coordinators should discuss the content, relevance and likely duration with the school Principal and relevant EWS Integrated Services Manager. This will determine if the training represents appropriate use of time and will add value to the role.

Where there is a cost involved in a training course, the HSCL coordinator and/ or school Principal may seek the advice of the relevant EWS Integrated Services Manager, to evaluate the course content, its value and relevance to the HSCL role, and whether it is an appropriate use of time and resources. A formal request should be submitted by the coordinator via the Application form for CPD for HSCL coordinators (see appendix).

Should a HSCL coordinator feel s/he requires additional training s/he should contact the relevant Manager, Tusla EWS and Principal, who will discuss the training needs in more detail. All requests for additional training and for funding for additional training should be submitted in writing to the Principal for approval by the school's BOM. The Principal may wish to contact the Tusla EWS Integrated Services Management Team, to discuss whether the proposed training falls within the HSCL remit and represents good value for money. If a HSCL coordinator wishes to fund CPD through the HSCL grant, an application form must be completed (see Appendix).

### 4.2 HSCL Family/ Local Cluster Meetings

Family and local clusters are a key area of work and an integral part of the support structure. The clusters supports HSCL coordinators both at a personal and professional level, for the sharing and dissemination of good practice and for the development of locally based responses and plans to address educational disadvantage. Clusters are deemed by the Department of Education and Skills as a way for 'HSCL coordinators [to] work on an inter-school, local and cluster level and will act as mutually supportive and co-operative teams using their complementary skills to the best advantage' (From Vision to Best Practice).

Cluster meetings are an excellent source of support, advice, inspiration and motivation. Family cluster, where appropriate, will meet roughly every week/fortnight. They engage around the same families and may plan joint interventions.

The Local Cluster is a larger group made up of coordinators from a wider area which meets 5-7 times a year. It is a requirement of Tusla EWS that local cluster meetings are held throughout the academic year. Cluster meetings help coordinators to share resources, to organise common courses and classes for parents, and to prepare transfer programmes. The meetings provide a structure to be informed of local initiatives to work with voluntary and statutory bodies. The meetings also support an integrated provision of services to parents and pupils in your particular area. Local cluster meetings provide professional support to each other which is vital, as the role of HSCL coordinator can be a challenging job at times. Cluster meetings follow the format whereby it is chaired by a HSCL Coordinator, an agenda is set and accurate minutes taken. The family and/ or local cluster meeting must be included in your weekly plan and your attendance is necessary.

#### 4.3 Tusla EWS Management Team

Tusla EWS Integrated Service Managers support and advise HSCL coordinators and schools on all aspects of the HSCL scheme in their relevant area. Managers regularly attend cluster meetings and visit schools.

<b>Manager</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Phone</b>
Maria Tobin	National Integrated Services Manager	<a href="mailto:maria.tobin@tusla.ie">maria.tobin@tusla.ie</a>	086-4119336
David Dineen	<b>Midwest &amp; Midlands</b>	<a href="mailto:david.dineen@tusla.ie">david.dineen@tusla.ie</a>	087-6899521
Danielle Flynn	<b>West</b>	<a href="mailto:danielle.flynn@tusla.ie">danielle.flynn@tusla.ie</a>	087-9188605
Irene Keogh	<b>Dublin Mid Leinster</b>	<a href="mailto:irene.keogh@tusla.ie">irene.keogh@tusla.ie</a>	087-0661488
Anne-Marie McGovern	<b>Dublin North East</b>	<a href="mailto:annemarie.mcgovern@tusla.ie">annemarie.mcgovern@tusla.ie</a>	087-9581991
Con Moynihan	<b>South</b>	<a href="mailto:con.moynihan@tusla.ie">con.moynihan@tusla.ie</a>	087-9085629

#### 4.4 HSCL National Administration Office

The HSCL Administrator, based in the national office, will deal with or redirect queries. Communication from Tusla EWS and other relevant services will be circulated through the HSCL office. Schools should ensure that the most-up-to-date contact details for the HSCL Coordinator, Principal and school are with the HSCL office.

Contact Person: Zita Robinson  
 Dublin West Education Centre (HSCL Administration Office)  
 Old Blessington Road  
 Tallaght  
 Dublin 24  
 Phone: 01-4528002/ 01 4528000

E-mail: [zrobinson@dwec.ie](mailto:zrobinson@dwec.ie)

#### 4.5 Social Inclusion Unit

The Social inclusion Unit in the Department of Education and Skills is responsible for the administration and allocation of HSCL posts and DEIS grants to schools.

Social Inclusion Unit

Department of Education and Skills

Cornamaddy

Athlone

Co. Westmeath

Phone: 090 6483764

E-mail:- [social\\_inclusion@education.gov.ie](mailto:social_inclusion@education.gov.ie)

Fax: 090 6483844

#### 4.6 Useful Publications

##### *DES/ Inspectorate*

- DES (2017), *DEIS Plan 2017*, Department of Education and Skills; [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
- DES Inspectorate (2015), *Looking at Action Planning in DEIS Primary Schools*, Department of Education and Skills, [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
- DES Inspectorate (2015), *Looking at Action Planning in DEIS Post-Primary Schools*, Department of Education and Skills, [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
- DES Inspectorate (2011), *An Evaluation of Planning Processes in DEIS Primary Schools*, Department of Education and Skills, [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
- DES Inspectorate (2011), *An Evaluation of Planning Processes in DEIS Post-Primary Schools*, Department of Education and Skills, [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
- DES (2011), *Literacy and Numeracy For Learning and Life – The National Strategy to improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020*, Department of Education and Skills, [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
- Department of Education and Science (2005), *DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in School)*, [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
- Archer, P. & Weir, S. (2011), *A Report on the First Phase of the Evaluation of DEIS*, Educational Research Centre, [www.erc.ie](http://www.erc.ie)
- Archer, P. & Shortt, F. (2003), *Review of the Home-School-Community Liaison Scheme - Report to the Department of Education and Science*, Educational Research Centre, [www.erc.ie](http://www.erc.ie)
- ERC (1994), *The Home-School-Community Liaison Scheme - Final Evaluation Report*, Educational Research Centre, [www.erc.ie](http://www.erc.ie)

##### *DCYA/ Tusla*

- Tusla Educational Welfare Services (2015). *Developing the statement of strategy for school attendance: Guidelines for schools*. [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)
- DCYA (2014), *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The national policy framework for children and young people 2014-2020*, The Stationery Office, [www.dcy.gov.ie](http://www.dcy.gov.ie)
- Tusla (2013). *Meitheal: A National Practice Model for all agencies working with children, young people and their families*. [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)

##### *HSCL – General*

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# Appendix

## HSCL Grants to Schools

The HSCL grant, allocated for the implementation of activities that are consistent with the principles and practices of the HSCL scheme, is incorporated within the overall annual grant, issued to all schools participating in DEIS.

The HSCL portion of the annual DEIS Grant is allocated to provide targeted supports, through the development of collaboration and partnership between the parents and teachers of children, who are at risk of educational disadvantage and early school leaving.

It is a requirement that a minimum of **10%** of the annual DEIS Grant to each school must be made available to the HSCL Coordinator for use on HSCL activities. If 10% of the DEIS Grant is not sufficient, the school should use its discretion as to the appropriate amount of funding from the DEIS Grant that should be provided to operate the HSCL service.

**Courses and activities to develop the role of the parent as the prime educator are among some of the key objectives under HSCL.** These can range from leisure activities, personal development and parenting skills, further education, as well as support with their children's learning.

Schools' Action Plans for Improvement should include formal arrangements to support successful transitions from early childhood care and education to primary, primary to post primary and post primary to further and higher education. HSCL will play a key role in engaging with other key actors to support transitions and ensure pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are fully supported.

Schools should establish links with other schools and engage with Local Community Development Committees and Children and Young People Services Committees structures to build on existing structures and expertise, avoid duplication of provision and make linkages to help pupils and parents engage in community activities.

Schools must be conscious of securing value for money, in relation to significant purchases of equipment e.g. laptops and/or printers. With this in mind, the allocated 10% of the DEIS Grant may only be spent on activities / resources which are directly linked to **parental involvement**, outlined in the school's Action Plan for Improvement and HSCL annual plan.

The HSCL spend must be monitored and directed appropriately and proportionately and utilised to obtain the outcomes as identified in the school's Action Plan for Improvement, which should be reviewed on a regular basis.

The HSCL Grant may also be used:-

- To establish and maintain a parent's room, excluding capital expenditure
- To support the adaptation of the curriculum and teaching methodologies to meet targeted children's needs

- To purchase appropriate/approved resources for HSCL activities, in line with the school's Action Plan for Improvement
- To pay appropriate travel expenses to the HSCL Coordinator incurred in the discharge of duties (home visitation, attendance at cluster meetings, Continuous Professional Development (CPD)). National CPD for Coordinators is centrally funded by the Educational Welfare Services, Tusla and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA). Schools contribute to CPD by covering travel expenses from the school's DEIS grant (*See Department of Finance Circular 05/2017 for appropriate rates*). Claims in respect of subsistence are not allowed.

The advice of the relevant Tusla EWS Integrated Services Manager should be obtained if further guidance is required on HSCL expenditure.

In accordance with Section 18 of the Education Act 1998 the Department requests that schools, other than ETB schools for which there are separate accounting arrangements, continue to keep record of all activities undertaken, materials and resources purchased with grants. Accounts of income and expenditure should be retained in the school and be made available, if required, to officers of the Department of Education and Skills and/or the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

In accordance with Section 51 of the ETB Act 2013 the Department requests that ETB's accounts of income and expenditure should be retained and made available from time to time to officers of the Department of Education and Skills.

#### **Financial support to schools as an alternative to services of HSCL Coordinator post**

The expenditure guidelines listed are also relevant for those DEIS schools, in receipt of financial support, (annual HSCL grant) in lieu of the services of a HSCL Coordinator i.e. where it is not possible for the school to avail of the services of a HSCL Coordinator within a HSCL cluster, due to the school's geographic location to other DEIS schools. These schools may utilise this grant to employ/assign a part time teacher to undertake the role of HSCL Coordinator. This role may not be undertaken by an existing teacher in the school.

# Appendix (page 1 of 5)

## Sample Planning and Reporting Templates for HSCL Coordinators - Weekly Plan Grid - Primary

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation              | 7. Courses and Classes-Parents  |
| 2. Home Visits                                   | 8. Policy Formation   |
| 3. Parents Involved in Literacy/Numeracy/Science | 9. Training Parents as Educational Home Visitors/Parents Supporting Parents |
| 4. Local Education Committee                     | 10. Integration with other agencies   |
| 5. Staff Development                             | 11. Cluster meetings  |
| 6. Meeting with Principal                        | 12. C.P.D.  |

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09.00-10.00					
10.00-11.00					
11.00-12.30					
12.30-14.30					

Name:

School:

## Appendix (page 2 of 5)

### Sample Planning and Reporting Templates for HSCL Coordinators - Weekly Plan Grid – Post Primary

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation              | 7. Courses and Classes-Parents                                     |
| 2. Home Visits                                   | 8. Policy Formation  |
| 3. Parents Involved in Literacy/Numeracy/Science | 9. Parents as Educational Home Visitors/Parents Supporting Parents |
| 4. Local Education Committee                     | 10. Integration with other agencies                                |
| 5. Staff Development                             | 11. Cluster meetings   |
| 6. Meeting with Principal                        | 12. C.P.D  |

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09.00-10.00					
10.00-11.00					
11.00-12.30					
13.30-14.30					
14.30-15.30					

Name:

School:

## Appendix (page 3 of 5)

**HOME SCHOOL COMMUNITY LIAISON SCHEME**  
**Sample Planning and Reporting Template for HSCL Coordinators**  
**MONTHLY RECORD SHEET**

<b>Area of Work</b>	<b>Ongoing/ Completed Actions</b>
<b>Parents</b>	
<b>Principal and Staff</b>	
<b>Literacy/ Numeracy/ Science</b>	
<b>Integration/ Community</b>	
<b>Family/ Local Cluster</b>	
<b>Transitions</b>	





<b>Where other sources of funding were sought for this training course, please provide details:</b>	
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**HSCL Coordinator Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Having obtained approval from the relevant EWS Integrated Services Manager, the completed application should be forwarded to the Principal/School Board of Management in advance of training course commencement date and a copy kept by the Principal and the Home School Community Liaison Coordinator.*

**PART II - APPROVAL FOR ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING COURSE:**

<b>School Principal Signature:</b>	_____
<b>Approval Date:</b>	_____