



## Home School Liaison Policy:



**School Name:** De La Salle College, Waterford.

**School Address:** Newtown, Waterford.

**School Roll Number:** 649500

**School Details:** De La Salle Waterford is a Voluntary Roman Catholic Secondary School under the trusteeship and the patronage of the Le Chéile Trust. The School is grant aided by the Department of Education & Skills and is a single sex (boys) school.

**School Management:** The Board of Management of De La Salle, Waterford is a statutory Board appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

### Mission Statement:

Inspired by its founder, the mission of the college is to: *“De La Salle College, Waterford is an all-boys Catholic school. It is a learning community where all students are valued and educated in preparation for a meaningful life”*

### Ethos:

As a Le Chéile school in the De La Salle tradition De La Salle Waterford seeks to promote the key values of a Le Chéile school as espoused by life St. Jean-Baptiste De La Salle. Graduates of our school are characterised a keen sense of the following:

- Intellectual Development
- Emotional and Social Development
- Moral Development
- Spiritual Development
- Concern for Others

Personal data collected about prospective students/students and their parents/guardians will be retained and used strictly in accordance with the provisions of GDPR legislation as introduced 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Further details on data protection are set out in the school’s Data Protection Policy.

## **Rational**

The Home School Community Liaison Scheme is an integral part of the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) initiative in many schools in the state. In De La Salle we are not considered to be a DEIS school but allocate portion of our SEN budget to some student's in a targeted intervention aimed at addressing educational disadvantage within the school. We are of the firm belief that up to 30% of our students are "DEIS" students and we allocate as many hours to the support of these students as our SEN allocation allows.

## **Goals**

- To maximize active participation of students in the learning process, in particular those who might be at risk of failure.
- To promote active co-operation between home, school and relevant community agencies in promoting the educational interests of the students.
- To raise awareness in parents / guardians of their own capacities to enhance their children's education process and to assist them in developing relevant skills.
- To enhance the students' participation, their retention in the educational system, their continuation to third level education and their life long attitude to learning.
- To develop a caring, open environment where information and guidance are provided and shared among the whole school community.

## **1. Introduction**

The Home School Community Liaison scheme seeks to promote partnership between the home and the school, parents / guardians and teachers. The purpose of this partnership is to enhance the students' learning opportunities and to promote their retention within the educational system.

This purpose is pursued by identifying and responding to parent / guardian needs and by creating a greater awareness in teachers of the complimentary role that parents play in their children's education.

The Home School Liaison teacher seeks to promote active co-operation between home, school and relevant community agencies in the education of young people. The scheme focuses directly on the relevant adults in the students' educational lives and seeks indirect benefits for the students themselves; that is, to develop parents / guardians as educators.

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Role of the Home School Liaison Teacher (HSLT)

1. To encourage, support and facilitate partnership between parents / guardians and teachers in the education of their children
2. To establish structures to identify the needs of parents / guardians.
3. To work with parents / guardians to prepare and support them as a resource to their own children and also to the wider school community.
4. To visit the homes of students in order to:
  - Build bonds of trust between home and school

- Encourage parents / guardians to become involved in their child's education.
- Bring information about the school and about services available in the community.

5. To seek out potential parent / guardian leaders, who are willing to participate in the HSLT scheme's activities and to be a resource to other parents /guardians.

6. To monitor the effectiveness of interventions, which have been put in place.

7. To facilitate the provision of leisure, curricular, parenting and personal development programmes for parents / guardians.

8. To work with the Educational Welfare Service and the School Completion Programme (SCP) in a unified way, to address issues, which affect attendance, participation and retention of children at risk of educational disadvantage and early school leaving.

9. To establish and maintain appropriate structures to facilitate the involvement of parents/guardians in their child's learning in areas such as literacy, numeracy, leisure/curricular courses, personal development, parenting, etc.

10. To liaise with voluntary and statutory agencies in the community.

11. To plan, monitor and evaluate HSCL interventions and programs.

#### The Role of Principal / Deputy Principals

- To encourage parents / guardians and staff to participate and support all activities and ideas in developing a whole school approach to the Home School Liaison scheme.
- To support the HSLT.

### **3. Principles**

The principles of the Home School Liaison policy are:

- The partnership of parents/guardians and teachers collaborating in the education and welfare of their students
- The scheme is unified and integrated at both primary and secondary levels
- The approach of the Home School Community Liaison scheme is preventative rather than curative
- The focus of the Home School Liaison scheme is on the adults whose attitudes and behaviours affect the lives of children, namely, parents /guardians and teacher
- The basis of activities in the scheme is the identification of needs and having those needs met
- The Home School Liaison scheme develops teacher and school staff attitudes in the areas of partnership and the whole-school approach
- The Home School Liaison scheme promotes the fostering of self-help and independence
- Home visitation is a crucial element in establishing bonds of trust with families
- Networking with and promoting the co-ordination of the work of voluntary and statutory agencies increases effectiveness, obviates duplication and leads to an integrated delivery of service to marginalized children and their families

#### **4. The work of Home School Liaison scheme Home Visitation:**

- Home visitation is at the heart of the HSLT scheme's focus on partnership. The ultimate purpose is to maximize the student's involvement and their retention in the education system.
- Through home visits the coordinator endeavours to extend the welcoming and friendly face of the school in the context and circumstances of daily life.
- The HSLT aims to be friendly and non-judgemental in his/her approach while carrying out home visits.
- It is important for the coordinator to show a willingness to listen and to stay as long as is necessary.
- During the visits, the HSCL coordinator gives information and establishes a rapport with the parents.
- The HSCL coordinator aims to help parents express their fears around approaching school, and seeks to break down negative attitudes among parents /guardians towards school and education.
- Referrals for home visits will come from the principal, teachers, pastoral care teams and parents / guardians.
- Teachers who express concerns and would like a home visit to a particular family, may refer to the HSLT.
- Home visits will not be made in the case of issues directly relating to student discipline or where the personal safety of the HSLT is deemed to be at risk.

#### **Other Duties:**

- Regular communication with the principal and school staff.
- Development of links with feeder primary schools.
- Participation in Information meeting for in-coming parents / guardians each year.
- Assisting and supporting Parents at Parent Teacher meetings and following up non-attendees.
- Drawing on expertise of the local community to provide training for our parents / guardians and co-operating with them to maximise the effectiveness of services available.
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#### **5. Success Criteria**

Success indicators will be

- Teacher / parent / guardian / community feedback,
- Greater involvement of marginalised parents / guardians in the education of their children,
- Improved communication between home and school,
- A more positive attitude towards the school from those at risk families,
- Improved attendance of at risk students.

## 6. Links to other Policies

- Guidance
- Anti-bullying
- Child-protection
- Code of behaviour
- SEN
- Admission and enrolment
- And other relevant policies as they are developed

### **Approval:**

This policy has been distributed to staff, parents and students for their approval. Amendments have been made after consultation with these stakeholders.

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management of De La Salle:

Chairperson: *N O'ra Widge*

Date: 14/10/21

This policy will be due for review on:

Date: October 2024