# **Rosstulla School**

**‘Together Towards Tomorrow’**



# **School Refuser Support Policy**

**Agreed by Governing Body, September 2023**

**Chairperson’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Statement of Ethos**

At Rosstulla, we are committed to being a welcoming school in which everyone feels valued, respected and supported. We aim to provide a nurturing, inclusive learning environment where each child is enabled to reach their full potential. We will strive to develop the life skills each pupil needs to become a valued member of their community, celebrating individual success and achievement along the way.

**School Refuser Support**

The Education Authority has requested that Rosstulla School offer support to pupils who are refusing to attend school. These pupils tend to fall into one of 2 categories.

1. Those who completely refuse to attend and have been absent from school for a long and continuous period of time
2. Those who struggle to come to school each day but manage to attend intermittently and sporadically. These pupils are at high risk of becoming school refusers.

Current resourcing consists of 1 full time Teacher Tutor and 1 full time Learning Support Assistant.

The purpose of the programme for category 1 pupils is to reintegrate the pupils back into the school setting on a more consistent basis. These pupils will become eligible for support after 1 full term of non-attendance.

The purpose of intervention for category 2 pupils is to increase school attendance and essentially prevent pupils from moving into category 1.

**Support at Category 1**

The return to school will be planned with the help of the pupil, parent, all agencies and services involved. The pupil’s voice will be heard to help identify concerns regarding their return to school. The plan should be manageable and achievable for pupil success. It will be a flexible programme based on the needs of the pupil.

The maximum hours per week of individual tuition with be 4.5 in line with EA ETA service. We suggest a period of 6 to 8 weeks intervention.

Some pupils require gradual reintegration with constant consultations between the pupil, school, parents and any other key professionals involved. Pupils may need to work in small group settings initially with preferred peers. Pupils may need visuals to support communication of the agreed plan. Pupils may have the support of an LSA during the period of reintegration. School staff will support the pupil pastorally and they may make referrals to other services for support.

It is vitally important for pupils to re-engage **as much as possible** with full-time education.

**Key Aspects of Reintegration Planning**

* The pupil, their parents/carers must be **fully engaged** with the reintegration plan. Other relevant agencies may be involved depending on the pupil’s individual circumstances e.g. Educational Welfare Service, CAMHS. Communication between all parties is vital if the plan is to be effective.
* When to begin the process of reintegration is a highly complex decision and will depend on a host of factors such as the age of the pupil, their general health, the resources required, the ability of the school to meet the needs of the pupil and the level of co-operation and communication between the parents/carers and the school staff. This will be a joint decision between all parties involved.
* Flexibility is crucial in the reintegration process as the pupil’s individual needs must be considered. In particular, everyone involved with the plan must be aware from the very outset that the process is rarely straightforward, setbacks are always likely, and perseverance will be required. It is important that school can adapt the reintegration plan to take account of changing circumstances.
* Parents/Carers will be required to **sign a contract of agreement** prior to support commencing.
* Timescales for reintegration are generally useful, but they must be realistic and flexible. We would expect **some** **progress** towards reintegration within a 6–8-week period of tuition. Where there is **no progress** within this period, school tuition will cease, and alternative support will be sought though EA and/or Health Services.

NB. This does not exclude the pupil from accessing the service again at a later stage if circumstances change.

* Success criteria must also be realistic. If a pupil who manages to engage with education can attend a maximum of 3 days per week, this should be celebrated, and the pupil complimented.
* Teacher Tutor support is short-term and time limited and therefore a programme must be very carefully planned.
* The pupil must never be allowed to think that individual tutoring is an alternative to school attendance. They should be in no doubt that a return to full-time education is expected at some point in the future.
* Relevant staff and pupils should be informed about the pupil’s return.
* Once reintegration has been accomplished, school must continue to monitor the situation in order to prevent a recurrence. In many cases, returning to school after holidays or after a period of illness can prove difficult for those pupils who experience anxiety-based school avoidance. Swift action on the part of the school can prevent the problem from re-escalating.

**Reintegration Plans**

The plan will include

* A baseline assessment using BOXALL (an assessment of emotional and behavioural development)
* A period of individual tutoring within the school setting with the main aim of building trust and confidence.
* The planned date for reintegration and review date.
* Awareness and development of social contacts for the pupil in return – access to friends, suitable class.
* A plan of reasonable adjustments e.g.
* A personalised flexible/reduced timetable.
* Preferred subjects initially
* Preferred key people initially
* Regular check ins
* Possible reward system
* Access to any additional support
* Online access to Seesaw
* Movement between accessible rooms
* Place to rest/time-out
* Special exam arrangements
* The success of the plan will be measured using BOXALL profiling, attendance records and level of engagement.

**Support at Category 2**

The class teacher will be the first point of contact for a pupil in category 2. Reasonable adjustments similar to those listed above can be put in place for these pupils. In addition, our Teacher Tutor will offer additional support for these pupils in an effort to identify the triggers for the school ad hoc school refusal and to explore possible support measures which could be put in place. It is essential that parents and carers agree to be fully involved and supportive of this plan.

*Appendix 1*

**Reintegration Plan**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Pupil:** | **D.O.B:** | **Year Group:** |
| **Key Teacher** | **School Number 02890862743** | **E-mail:** |
| **Parent/Carer** | **Mob:** | **E-mail:** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Proposed date of return** |  |
| **Review dates** |  |
| **Proposed dates of Teacher Tutor involvement** | From: To: |

|  |
| --- |
| **Reason for School Avoidance (if known):**  **Most problematic aspect of school return:**  **Resources employed to assist pupil:**  **Role of teacher tutor:**  Note: where a child’s identified additional needs involve work/support from other agencies. The appropriate agencies would be informed/consulted regarding this plan outlining their involvement and how they might support this ‘Reintegration Plan’. |

*Appendix 2*

***SAMPLE REINTEGRATION PLAN***

**PUPIL**

**SCHOOL**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DATE** | **VENUE** | **ACTION** | **STAFF** |
| Week  1 | Public library/school | Teacher Tutor **introduction**  3x 1hour lessons  Lessons **preferably in school**. Realistically home/library | 1. **Teacher Tutor** |
| Weeks  2 - 3 | Public Library or School | 3 x 1.5 hour lessons  At end of Week 3 with view to including **social time/class**  In school **VP will visit lesson** to speak/engage with Pupil | 1. **Teacher Tutor** 2. **School VP/Senior Management** |
| Weeks  4 - 5 | School | 3 x 1.5hour lessons. 1 session with LSA  Possible introduction to **Pupil choice of class. Adapt to school environment** | 1. **Teacher Tutor** 2. **School VP/Senior Management.** 3. **Chosen school subject teacher.** |
| Weeks  6 - 8 | School | Increase in school time with **Teacher Tutor time decreasing** by one lesson per week.  Class/**subject teacher time increasing** | 1. **Teacher Tutor time decreases.** 2. **School VP/Senior Management** 3. **Chosen school subject teachers time increases.** |
| Week  9 | **Return to school** | Pupil **returns to agreed bespoke school timetable with LSA support** | **Teacher Tutor closure**   1. **Timetabled school staff involved** 2. **LSA support** |

The reintegration plan will be subject to review.

* Teacher Tutor will contact parent weekly for an update on Pupil’s wellbeing and progress.
* School Based Care Team discussion bi-monthly
* Multi professional team meetings where possible