



SCHOOL AVOIDANCE PROJECT

1. Introduction

Limerick CYPSC, with support from Southill Hub, are inviting tenders from individuals, companies or consortia with expertise in research and experience working in education, with a particular focus on school avoidance, to develop a suite of resources in order to assist in addressing the issue of school avoidance.

2. Context

Limerick CYPSC is an interagency structure under Tusla Child and Family Agency. CYPSC consists of senior level representatives of agencies that have a remit around delivering services to children and their families. CYPSC follow local authority boundaries and plan and co-ordinate services for children and young people aged between 0 – 24 years in their geographic area. Their role is to enhance interagency co-operation and to realise the five National Outcomes for children and young people, as set out in [*Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures – the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2014 - 2020*](#). The central purpose of a Children and Young People's Services Committee is to ensure effective interagency co-ordination and collaboration to achieve the best outcomes for all children and young people in its area.

3. Project Description

Limerick CYPSC is facilitating an interagency School Avoidance Working Group¹ that is seeking to develop a multiagency coordinated response to the issue of School Avoidance. The reasons for school avoidance are multiple and often complex. Within that complexity, the School Avoidance Working group believe there is space for the development of an approach towards responding to this issue in a more collaborative manner.

The project will require the successful candidate(s) to have a strong understanding of service delivery and referral pathways of relevant stakeholders that work with children and families around school avoidance.

4. Project Schedule

This project should be completed within 6 months of signing of contracts. The project will be divided into phases, as agreed by the School Avoidance Working Group and the successful candidate(s).

5. Project Tasks:

- Literature review of existing research and existing resources

¹ Members of the School Avoidance Working Group include representatives from Tusla, University of Limerick (REPPP), Tusla Education Support Service (TESS), National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD), Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB), Primary Care Psychology, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), HSE Disability, Foróige Youth Diversion Project, Limerick Youth Service, Southill Hub, Ballyhoura Development and Barnardos.

- Consultations with multiple stakeholders in Limerick with accompanying written report *
- Development of a suite of user-friendly resources for 1) schools; 2) parents; and 3) students (primary and post-primary) informed by the literature review and consultations that highlights the early indicators/early stages of school avoidance and provides guidance on strategies and available resources to support a response.
- Development of a tool to support schools and other agencies assess and identify the appropriate supports for a school avoiding student and their family.
- Development of an agreed pathway of supports amongst relevant stakeholders.

*Consultations will be a combination of group and one-to-one across three core groups of stakeholders – services; children and young people; and parents. Guidance and support will be provided from the School Avoidance Working Group for participation of children ,young people and parents with experience of school avoidance. The participation of children and young people will be facilitated using the Lundy Model of Participation.

- Relevant service stakeholders (excluding schools) - a mixture of service specific and group consultations
- Schools – group consultations made up of principals, deputy principles, HSCLs, SCPs and other school representatives in primary and post-primary and alternative education settings).
- Parents – a mixture of individual and group consultations
- Young People (primary and post-primary) – a mixture of individual and group consultations

6. Outputs

The following outputs will be informed by the literature review and consultations:

1. Written report of consultations undertaken.
2. A suite of user-friendly resources for schools, parents and students (primary and post-primary) that highlights the early indicators/early stages of school avoidance and provides guidance on strategies and available resources to support a response.²
3. An agreed tool to support Limerick-based schools or other services identify the appropriate supports for a student and their family where school avoidance is an issue context and needs
4. An agreed pathway for Limerick amongst relevant stakeholders in Limerick where school avoidance is established and beyond the capacity of the school and parents/carers to respond.

All outputs will be owned and remain with Limerick CYPSC.

7. Key Competencies

The successful candidates should have:

- a strong understanding of the service delivery and referral pathways of multiple stakeholders that work with children and families around school avoidance;
- a background in or experience of research in education;
- experience working with parents and children and young people;

² Formatting and graphic design will be provided external to this tender.

- strong facilitation skills;
- strong communication and consultation skills with a range of stakeholders;
- capacity to work in partnership with multiple agencies and to work independently
- capacity to reflect and review progress and adapt when necessary
- flexibility and ability to respond to changing needs.

8. Instructions to Tenderers

8.1 Tender requirements

Please ensure that the tender application contains the following elements;

- Process/ timetable listing key milestones (for reporting progress on various stages of development) and dates for meeting the deadline.
- Methodology to be used.
- Detailed budget and demonstrate value for money.
- Breakdown of time allocations.
- Identification of any conflicts of interests.
- Previous experience of research/evaluation related research.
- An outline of skills, qualifications, and experience in the area.
- Referee: contact details must be supplied for two referees, that Limerick CYPSC can contact who have engaged the proposed consultant for similar/ related work.
- Late proposals will not be considered.
- All supporting material and documentation should be included in the proposal.
- Details of all subcontracted personnel brought onto the project.
- Evidence of insurance, tax compliance and company registration.
- Evidence of completion of [‘Introduction to Children First’](#) by candidate(s)

8.2 Confidentiality

All information supplied in connection with this RFT shall be regarded as confidential and by submitting an offer, the Tenderer agrees to be bound by the obligation to preserve the confidentiality of all such information.

8.3 Queries and Clarifications

All queries or clarification requests relating to this RFT must be submitted as per the submission details below. If relevant a response may be issued to all Tenderers.

9. Budget

The budget for the project is **€20,000 (incl. VAT)**

A payment schedule will be agreed prior to beginning the project. It is likely to be made in a number of phases, as well as a fee upon signing of the contract.

10. Evaluation

Criteria Weighting

Proven capability and experience in research and evaluation	30%
Proven knowledge, understanding and experience of the tender scope	30%
Methodology	20%
Cost	20%

11. Submissions

Tenderers are to ensure that all necessary documents and information are submitted. Any incomplete tenders may be rejected and the decision will be final.

All relevant documentation and queries to be submitted as detailed below. Costs must be quoted in Euro. Late submissions will not be considered.

12. Timelines for Application:

Interested applicants are encouraged to contact the following for clarity regarding the project before applying: david.studer@tusla.ie

A soft copy tender should be emailed to david.studer@tusla.ie . Deadline for receipt of applications is: **Thursday 15th September**

Candidates need to be available for in-person interview the week beginning **Monday 19th September**.

The successful tenderer will be offered contract subject to Garda vetting by Southill Hub.