



Droichead Policy

THIS POLICY HAS BEEN FORMULATED TO INFORM NQTS AND TEACHING STAFF OF THE DROICHEAD PROCESS (THE INDUCTION & MENTORING OF NQTS).

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1. DROICHEAD - AN INTRODUCTION

Initial Teacher Induction is carried out in Ballydesmond NS through engagement with Droichead - an integrated induction framework for newly qualified teachers (NQTs). Droichead builds on the learning which has taken place during initial teacher education, in particular, the extended school placement. At the same time, it recognises that induction is a distinct phase on the continuum of teacher education, a socialisation process into the teaching profession. The integrated framework includes both school based and additional professional learning activities to address the needs of teachers as they begin their careers.

1.1 Aims of Droichead:

- To guide the whole school implementation of *Droichead* in Ballydesmond NS and to support the induction of newly qualified teachers (NQTs)
- To identify the roles and clarify the responsibilities across the Ballydesmond NS community in support of *Droichead*
- To identify the protocols underpinning the *Droichead* process in Ballydesmond NS
- To identify the documents in support of the process

2. THE DROICHEAD PROCESS

The primary aim of the Droichead process is to support the professional development of NQTs during the induction phase of their careers. It lays the foundation for subsequent professional growth in the next phase of their career.

Droichead takes as its starting point the areas for further learning which have been identified by the NQT, in collaboration with the PST, as part of the extended school placement. Following the Droichead process, a declaration is made by the NQT that he or she is ready to move to the next phase on the continuum of teacher education. A joint declaration is made by the teacher and experienced colleagues, following collective reflection, that through their engagement in Droichead, they have participated in a quality teaching and learning process. The Teaching Council then removes the Droichead condition



from the teacher's registration. The teacher will be fully registered with the Council when all registration conditions (e.g. Irish Language Requirement,

qualification shortfall conditions) have been deemed by the Teaching Council to have been met.

There are two key strands of the Droichead process as an integrated induction framework for newly qualified teachers.

- The first strand is a school-based induction (Strand A), through which the NQT is supported by experienced colleagues.
- The second strand is made up of additional professional learning activities (Strand B), which involves: (a) attendance at NQT cluster meetings in local education centres, and (b) one other professional learning activity, related to the needs of the NQT

The process can be completed by an NQT in one of the following roles

- A member of SET
- Classroom Teacher

If an NQT is not completing the process as a mainstream classroom teacher, they will receive the opportunity to teach Gaeilge in a mainstream class setting.

NQTs must complete a minimum block of 60 consecutive school days from the date they were appointed. In order to provide as meaningful an induction experience as possible for the NQT, the length of the induction period will exceed 60 days in most cases.

3. SCHOOL-BASED STRAND - PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT TEAM (PST)

The roles and responsibilities of the PST may vary from year to year, but their primary goal is to support NQTs. The PST in Ballydesmond NS will, where possible, be comprised of highly experienced (5 years+ teaching experience desirable) and motivated teaching staff who have undertaken the NIPT training.

3.1 PST Roles

The dual role of the PST in Ballydesmond NS is to:



- **Guide and advise** the NQT during school-based induction, in the first stages of their professional journey
- **Form a joint declaration** with the NQT that they have participated in a quality teaching and learning process

Droichead: Policy Teaching Council, March 2017, p.3, 1.1.1.3

3.2 PST Responsibilities

The responsibilities agreed by our PST are identified in a separate document.

Our PST's responsibilities are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive and will be reviewed in light of experience. Responsibilities directly relating to support and mentoring relate to all team members while other responsibilities are designated to a named team member. We recognise that it is also important that these agreed responsibilities are communicated to the NQT at the earliest opportunity.

In support of a NQT's *Droichead* process, the PST will invite the wider school staff to provide opportunities for...

- Co-planning
- Co-teaching
- Sharing of resources
- Engaging in professional conversations
- Facilitating class observation

PST members

Name	Role	Trained in Droichead (year)
Pat Neenan	PST member & Principal	2017
Ella O' Sullivan	PST member & Deputy	2018
Christine Sheehan	PST member & Infant teacher	2018



NQT/s in the current school year

Name	TC Reg. No.	Setting	Commencement date

3.3 Taisce - Portfolio Based Learning

Portfolio-based learning is an important process to support the NQT in engaging with their teaching and building a bank of resources to draw upon in their future career. Therefore, as a self-directed learner, and to support reflective practice, NQTs will maintain a Taisce.

Engaging in the process of portfolio-based learning enables the NQT to reflect on their professional learning in a way that suits them. It enables them to identify and plan for areas in which they may need further support or guidance. Droichead allows for a large measure of flexibility in the creation of Taisce, with the format and contents decided and owned by the NQT.

4. OBSERVATIONS

In Ballydesmond NS, we work to foster a culture of collaborative planning, team teaching and mutual learning. We acknowledge that observing our colleagues performing best practice enhances our methodologies and gives us the opportunity to reflect on our own teaching.

4.1 Observations by NQT:

Within the Droichead process, an NQT will choose the settings and subject areas that they wish to observe. The PST will coordinate with teaching staff to ensure that the NQT is provided with opportunities to learn from their colleagues. It is recommended that there would be at least two classroom observations carried out by the NQT. The exact number (and the classes



observed) should be based on discussions between the NQT and the PST members based on emerging needs.

4.2 Observations by the PST of the NQTs' Practice:

Observations by PST members of the NQTs' practice should focus on areas where the NQT feels that they need particular advice, help and support. In this light, while all observations are arranged in advance, the NQT should be encouraged to teach in an area where they feel their learning is greatest. This can then provide the basis for a subsequent professional conversation. It is recommended that there would be at least three classroom observations carried out by the PST. The PST will be best placed to determine on a case-by-case basis how many observations may be necessary, and to coordinate these within the overall outline plan for the Droichead process.

5. ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

To complement the school-based induction strand outlined above, NQTs also engage in additional professional learning activities as part of the Droichead process. This includes cluster meetings & CPD.

6. PROTOCOLS

This policy adheres to the protocols identified in the *Droichead – The Integrated Induction Framework*, Teaching Council, March 2017. This policy is specifically supported by the following sections:

- Professional conversations: p. 5
- Observation: p. 5
- Maintaining records of the *Droichead* process: p. 6
- Concluding the *Droichead* process: p. 7



7. STANDARDS TO GUIDE AND SUPPORT THE DROICHEAD PROCESS

The Teaching Council has established standards to support the Droichead process in guiding the NQT, with the PST, in relation to their professional learning and practice. Through their engagement in the Droichead process, the NQT will:

1. Have engaged professionally with school-based induction and additional professional learning activities
2. Have shown their professional commitment to quality teaching and learning for their pupils
3. Have engaged in reflective practice that supports their professional learning and practice, both individually and collaboratively.

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

This policy is part of a suite of documents to support *Droichead* in the school. These documents include:

- *Droichead: The Integrated Induction Framework*, Teaching Council, March 2017
- Teaching Council Standards (accompanied by our customised Indicators and Examples of School Context)
- PST Roles and responsibilities
- *Droichead* Outline drafted by the PST and finalised with NQT input
- Needs Analysis/Induction Plan – updated regularly in collaboration with NQT

This policy will be subject to regular review in the light of ongoing experiences. The review of the policy will be led by the principal in collaboration with members of the PST.



NIPT

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____ (Chairperson)
_____ (Principal)