

Droichead Policy of the Patrician Secondary School



**Patrician Secondary**  
**School,**

***Droichead***



*Le Chéile*  
*A Catholic Schools Trust*

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## **Droichead Policy of the Patrician Secondary School**

### **The Droichead Process**

The Droichead process is an integrated professional induction framework for newly qualified teachers. It recognises the effectiveness of the reconceptualised programmes of initial teacher education and particularly the extended school placement, in the professional preparation of student teachers. It builds on that phase, taking as its starting point the areas for further learning that have been identified by the NQT in collaboration with the HEI as part of the school placement experience. At the same time, it recognises that induction is a distinct phase of the continuum of teacher education, a socialisation process into the teaching profession. This integrated framework includes both school-based and additional professional learning activities to address the needs of teachers as they begin their careers.

The main objective of the Droichead process is to support the professional learning of the NQTs during the induction phase, thus laying the foundations for subsequent professional growth and learning for the next phase of their career.

1.1.1.3 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 by the Council when all registration conditions (e.g., Irish Language Requirement, qualifications shortfall conditions) have been deemed by the Teaching Council to have been met.

When an NQT is employed in a participating school in an eligible setting and for the minimum period of professional practice they register for the Droichead process with The Teaching Council using the DR1 form. An email confirmation is issued to the NQT from The Teaching Council confirming that they have registered for the Droichead process. This record should be retained, to be submitted with a completed Form D. 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 one (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 attendance at NQT cluster meetings in local education centres, and one other professional learning activity, related to the needs of the NQT. Typical learning activities might be, for example, participation in a workshop, a meeting of a Teacher Professional Network/subject association, an online/ blended learning activity, attendance at a conference, Féilte, etc.

## **Droichead Policy of the Patrician Secondary School**

### **What are 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, as follows. NQT Cluster Meetings and other Professional Learning Activities NQTs engage in one cluster meeting per term, in a local education centre. The meetings are facilitated by NIPT and in collaboration with the group of NQTs. The agenda is developed in consultation with the NQTs, and may include key elements of Droichead such as the observation process, professional conversations, Taisce, etc. Other professional learning activity NQTs should also engage in one other professional learning activity, identified by themselves in accordance with their professional learning needs, in consultation with the PST. Typical learning activities might be, for example, participation in a workshop, a meeting of a Teacher Professional Networks (subject association), an online/blended learning activity, attendance at a conference, Féilte, etc

### **What is Taisce?**

Portfolio-based learning is an important process to support the NQT in engaging in these professional conversations. The Council uses the term Taisce, (Irish for treasure trove) to refer to this process of portfolio based learning. Engaging in the process of portfolio-based learning enables the NQT to reflect on their professional learning in a way that suits them and identify and plan for areas in which they may need further support or guidance. Further detail on this process is available from the Droichead ebook on the Droichead pages of the Council's website. Practical guidance on this process is available to NQTs and the PST from the NIPT

### **What is the PST**

The PST is a team of experienced and fully registered teachers, including a principal and a mentor, who work collaboratively to support the NQT during the *Droichead* process, and who support his or her entry into both the school and the profession. In turn, the PST is assisted in its work through the provision of a range of supports and resources.

### **Who are the members of the PST?**

The PST is made up of experienced and fully registered teachers. Ideally, PST members each have **five years'** experience or more. When the members of the PST first meet, they may decide that different members of the team will take on different roles. For example:

The principal will have to have an oversight role and will ensure that the process is carried out appropriately, but may choose not to be directly involved in observing the NQT. He or she may delegate those aspects to the deputy principal, mentor and/or other experienced teachers, as appropriate.

The *mentor has a uniquely supportive role*, and works closely with the NQT on a regular basis to support planning, preparation and reflection. The mentor also *facilitates* a range of school-based induction experiences including observation of other teachers teaching and opportunities for the NQT to be observed.

## **Droichead Policy of the Patrician Secondary School**

Other members of the PST are mentors also who engage with the NQT as part of the *Droichead* process and who may observe the NQT periodically and provide feedback based on those observations. The role of the PST is to support and guide the NQT in the first stages of his or her professional journey.

In the case of post-primary teachers, one or more members of the PST may be teachers in the same subject area, but need not necessarily be so. Where there is no PST member with the same subject, the PST may wish to consider drawing on expertise from other staff members, or perhaps from a neighbouring school.

### **What is the role of the mentor ?**

While a whole school approach to the induction of NQTs is promoted, the role of the mentor within the whole school context is crucial to the support of the NQT. NQTs value and acknowledge the importance of having 'someone there for them' as they take their first steps on their professional journey as a teacher. The mentor is someone the NQT can turn to for personal, professional and pedagogical support throughout that crucial time. The mentor supports, guides and challenges the NQT, and acts as a role model for him or her. He or she has no evaluative role, it is purely supportive. The NPT has defined the mentor's role to include the following:

- to provide professional and pedagogical support for the NQT
- to coordinate the induction plan and induction activities in collaboration with the principal and the NQT
- to attend mentor professional development seminars, particularly mentors who are in their first two years of mentoring
- to liaise with the principal in providing short updates on the induction of NQTs
- to liaise with other staff members in relation to opportunities for the NQT to visit their classrooms and work alongside other class teachers
- to liaise with other schools in the local area for the purpose of observing and sharing practice
- to consult with the principal on release time (for mentor and NQT) regarding substitution arrangements
- to support the NQT with his/her planning and reflection
- to enable and empower the NQT to seek/ source answers to questions
- to establish clear boundaries for the mentor-NQT relationship
- to familiarise the NQT with school policies and procedures
- to work collaboratively with the NQT in the classroom, e.g., observing and giving feedback
- to accept and give feedback in a constructive, open and professional manner and
- to engage in action planning with the NQT.
- As part of the *Droichead* model, it is expected that PSTs will, at the outset of the process, agree the roles of each PST member.



## **Droichead Policy of the Patrician Secondary School**

### **What is the role of the Principal in the Droichead Process?**

- To invite teachers to be a member of the school Professional Support Team
- To brief the NQT on the nature and purpose of the *Droichead* process within the school
- To outline at the initial meeting the roles of the Mentor, NQT, Principal and 'other' member of PST
- To consult with the PST members and NQT regarding the *Droichead* Outline for the period of time that the NQT is teaching in the school
- To support the PST members and NQT/s
- To attend *Droichead* professional development
- To brief school staff, parents and Board of Management on the nature and purpose of the school's involvement in *Droichead*
- To liaise with the PST members regarding inputs at staff meetings on the *Droichead* process
- To keep records including copies of timetables and induction plans when substitute cover is being availed of, as part of the *Droichead* process
- To oversee the *Droichead* criteria including planning and preparation for teaching and learning by NQTs and put arrangements in place to support same.
- To ensure that the *Droichead* process is carried out appropriately in the school and to develop a whole-school policy on induction

### **What is the role of the other PST members?**

- To provide professional and pedagogical support for the NQT
- To co-ordinate the overall *Droichead* process in collaboration with the PST members and the NQT, including communicating meeting schedules and agendas and the coordination of *Droichead* Release Time
- To liaise with the *Droichead* Associate
- To attend *Droichead* professional development and provide information to PST members and/or staff, when required
- To liaise with PST members in providing short updates at staff meetings on the *Droichead* process
- To enable and empower the NQT to seek/source answers to questions
- To establish clear boundaries for the other PST member-NQT relationship
- To work in partnership with the NQT in the classroom e.g. observing and giving feedback
- To accept and give feedback in a constructive, open and professional manner
- To engage in action planning with the NQT in relation to *Droichead* criteria
- To coordinate the conclusion of the *Droichead* process for the NQT with PST members
- To adopt a professional approach at all times

## **Droichead Policy of the Patrician Secondary School**

### **In what settings may a newly qualified post-primary teacher undertake the Droichead process?**

A post-primary teacher will normally undertake the Droichead process when employed in a recognised post-primary school. As a general rule, paid employment in a permanent, temporary or substitute capacity is eligible, so long as such employment will afford the teacher the opportunity to meet the minimum duration requirements. A post-primary teacher may also complete the Droichead process where they are employed in one of the following roles: a) a special school where a proportion of the pupils attending the school are of post-primary age, and where the teacher is teaching a post-primary curricular subject(s) to such pupils, or b) a Centre for Education where a post-primary curricular subject(s) is being taught. It should be noted that where NQTs are employed in the above settings via voluntary (unpaid) service or internship schemes such as JobBridge, and similar such schemes that may be commenced in the future, this is not deemed acceptable by the Teaching Council as being suitable for Droichead

The **minimum period** following which a recommendation may be made by the PST to the Teaching Council regarding the NQT's professional practice is a period of **200 hours**.

### **PST Team (Date)**

Pat Moloney – **Mentor**

Andy Burke - **Mentor**

Conor Cunnane –**Mentor**

Anne Raftery - **Mentor**

Damien Scallan – **Mentor**

Mary Joyce - **Mentor**

Killian Whelan - **Mentor**

Ronan Tuite - **Mentor**

### **NQTs (Date)**

*"Mentee Name" - Mentor is "Name", Experienced Other is "Name"*

**NB: It is vital that NQTs fill in the DR1 form that can be found on the website of the Teaching Council and give a copy of the confirmation email to the PST before the process can begin. The NQT also retains a copy of the confirmation email and includes it with FORM D when they send it in at the end of the process.**

## **Droichead Policy of the Patrician Secondary School**

### **Schedule of Observations**

Normally the NQT should undertake 3 observations before October Mid-Term. The NQT should observe 1 teacher at Junior Cert level and a different teacher at Leaving Cert level. The last observation is of the Mentor.

It is **essential** that the NQT has a professional conversation with each of the teachers they observe before they enter their classroom. This is to discuss what they are going to observe and discuss things like where they are going to sit etc. Mentor and once by the Experienced Other. Then in December, time permitting, the NQT will be observed once by the Deputy Principal.

**N.B. The above timeline may be adjusted in consultation with the NQT and the PST where necessary.**

### **Summary Of Observations**

<i>NQT observes other teachers teaching</i>	<i>NQT is observing teaching and feedback</i>
At least 2 1 of a Junior Cert teacher 1 of a different teacher at Leaving Cert 1 of the Mentor (*last one always*)	At least 3 1 by the Mentor 1 by the Experienced Other 1 by the Deputy Principal

### **Timeline for Observations From October - December**

	NQT carries out 2/3 observations
	Mentor observes the NQT
	Experienced Other observes the NQT
	Deputy Principal observes the NQT

**These are subject to agreement with the NQT & PST.**

## **Droichead Policy of the Patrician Secondary School**

### **Procedures for Observations:**

*Scaffolding the observation process:*

- Planning the Observations
- Observation
- Post- Observation

It is important that the post observation takes place as close as possible to the observation where possible. This might be the class after or the next day. Do not let it go too long.

### **PST Meetings with the NQT**

- August
- September (end of it, after the observations)
- October (before mid-term)
- Start of November
- December – review meeting, look at Taisce and signing of forms

**Sample templates for observations can be found in the Droichead Folder.**

**Ratified by the Board of Management on:**

5/10/23

**Signed (Proposed):**

Gemma

**Signed (Seconded):**

Andy Burden

**Signed (Principal):**

Pat Moloney

**Signed (Chairperson):**

Pat Heaney