



ARDSCOIL  
MHUIRE

**Droichead**

**Policy 2024**

## **CONTENTS**

1. Mission
2. Purpose
3. Rationale
4. Scope
5. Legal Framework
6. Introduction
7. Objectives
8. Protocols
9. Settings in which Droichead can take place
10. Observations
11. Taisce
12. Professional support teams roles
13. Professional support team responsibilities
14. NQT role
15. NQT responsibilities
16. Review and Declaration
17. Appendix 1
18. Appendix 2

## **List of acronyms**

**ASM: Ardscoil Mhuire**

**NIPT: National Induction Programme for Teachers**

**OIDE: New support service for schools, teachers and leaders**

**NQT: Newly Qualified Teacher**

**PST: Professional Support Team**

## **Mission Statement**

*Ardcoil Mhuire provides a Christian environment where all persons are valued and assisted to reach their full potential.*

## **Purpose**

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

## **Rationale**

In line with the Teaching Council's policy on *Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework*, March 2017, Ardcoil Mhuire is offering Droichead for newly qualified teachers (NQTs).

## **Scope**

This Induction Policy applies to all NQTs partaking in Droichead in Ardcoil Mhuire. It also applies to Senior Management, members of the Professional Support Team (PST) and teaching staff. This policy was devised and formulated by the school community of Ardcoil Mhuire, inclusive of all stakeholders, staff, parents, students and the Board of Management.

## **Legal Framework**

This Induction Policy has been informed by the following:

- The Education Act (1998)
- The Education (Welfare) Act 2000

- The Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) 2012
- *Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework 2017*
- Teaching Council's Post-qualification Professional Practice Conditions Transitional Arrangements (see [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie) for current publication)
- Post-qualification Professional Practice Procedures and Criteria (see [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie) for current publication)
- Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Addendum to Children First (2019) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Looking at our School 2022: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018

## **Introduction**

The Droichead process is an integrated professional induction framework for NQTs. It recognises the effectiveness of the reconceptualised programmes of initial teacher education (ITE) 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 Higher Education Institution (HEI) as part of the school placement experience. At the same time, it recognises that induction is a distinct phase in 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.

Following the Droichead process, a declaration is made by the NQT that they are ready to move to the next phase on the continuum of teacher education. A joint declaration is made by the teacher and PST, 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 Teaching Council when all registration conditions (e.g., Irish Language Requirement, qualifications shortfall conditions) have been deemed by them to have been met.

When an NQT is employed in a participating school in an eligible setting (see Droichead Framework 1.1.2) and for the minimum period of professional practice (see Droichead Framework 1.1.3), they apply for the Droichead process via the 'My Registration' portal on [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie). An email confirmation is issued to the NQT from the Teaching Council confirming that they have applied for the Droichead process. This record should be retained.

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 Professional Support Team.

The second strand is made up of additional professional learning activities, Strand B, which involves attendance at NQT cluster meetings (one per term), 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: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework, March 2017.* For the full Droichead Policy and relevant accompanying documentation, please refer to [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie).

## Objectives

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

*Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework, Teaching Council,*

The Teaching Council has set out the following standards to support the Droichead process, in guiding the NQT, along with the PST, in relation to their professional learning and practice. Indicators of good practice in the context of Ardscoil Mhuire are included in the school standards document that has been contributed to by all stake holders (Appendix 3). Through their engagement in the Droichead process, the NQT will:

- Have engaged professionally with school-based induction and additional professional learning activities.
- Have demonstrated a satisfactory commitment to quality teaching and learning for their pupils/students.
- Have demonstrated an ability to engage in reflective practice that supports their professional learning and practice, both individually and collaboratively.

*Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework, Teaching Council, March 2017, Appendix 1.*

## Protocols

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

- Professional conversations: page 5
- Observation: page 5
- Maintaining records of the Droichead process: page 6

- Concluding the Droichead process: page 7

This policy is part of a suite of documents formulated to support Droichead in the school.

These documents include:

- *Droichead: The Integrated Induction Framework*, Teaching Council, March 2017.
- Droichead- Ardscoil Mhuire Standards Document. (Appendix 3)
- PST Roles and Responsibilities. (Appendix 1)
- NQT Roles and Responsibilities. (Appendix 2)

### **Settings in which the Droichead process can take place**

A post-primary teacher will normally undertake the Droichead process when employed in a recognised post-primary school. As a rule, paid employment in a permanent, temporary or substitute capacity is eligible, so long as such employment includes teaching of a post-primary curricular subject(s) to a designated class on the school's timetable, or employment in a learning support, special needs or language support position.

The teacher must apply for the Droichead process via the 'My Registration' portal on [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie). It should be noted that these are absolute minimum periods of practice. Given that Droichead as an induction framework is designed to provide the maximum degree of support, guidance and advice, it is recommended, where an NQT has additional time in their school, over and above the minimum requirements set out above, that this extra time be used to support the Droichead process.

*Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework*, Teaching Council, March 2017, p. 4-5.

### **Observations**

Observations are also a key feature of Droichead. This includes observations by the NQT of more experienced teachers' practice, as well as observation of the NQT's practice by the PST. Both types of observations are arranged in advance and provide NQTs with opportunities to learn from their fellow professionals. Observations by the PST of the NQT's practice should focus on areas where the NQT feels that they need advice, help and



support. The NQT should therefore be encouraged to teach in an area where they feel their learning need is greatest. This can then provide the basis for a subsequent professional conversation. It is recommended that there would be at least one of each type of classroom observation (observations by the NQT, and observations of the NQT's practice), and that the exact number, and the classes observed, should be based on discussions between the NQT and the PST.

*Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework, Teaching Council, March 2017, p. 5*

### **Taisce: Portfolio-based learning**

Portfolio-based learning is an important process used 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 to identify and plan for areas in which they may need further support or guidance.

*Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework, Teaching Council, March 2017, p.*

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Professional Support Team (PST) Role:**

The PST is a team of fully registered teachers, ideally with five years or more teaching experience, which may include the Principal or Deputy Principals, who work collaboratively to support and mentor the NQT during school-based induction. All PST members at Ardscoil Mhuire have completed a programme of professional learning with the Droichead Induction Division, including mentor skill development. Ardscoil Mhuire, may form a school PST, an inter-school PST or may invite one external PST member to join the internal school staff.

Supporting a newly qualified teacher during Droichead is always a collaborative process, although the roles and responsibilities of PST members may vary in different school

contexts. Therefore, the roles and responsibilities, are agreed before the Droichead process commences.

*The dual role of the PST 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: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework, Teaching Council, March 2017, p.3*

### **PST Responsibilities:**

The responsibilities agreed by the PST at Ardscoil Mhuire are identified in **Appendix 1** of this policy. The PST's responsibilities are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive and will be reviewed annually. Responsibilities regarding support and mentoring relate to all team members while other responsibilities are designated to a named team member. The PST at Ardscoil Mhuire recognise that it is also important that these agreed responsibilities are communicated to the NQT at the earliest opportunity. The PST at Ardscoil Mhuire will share its role and agreed responsibilities with the NQT(s) at their initial meeting.

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 classroom observation

## **NQT Role:**

Supporting an NQT through Droichead at Ardscoil Mhuire is always a collaborative process. Droichead is fundamentally about the NQT's professional journey and the process of their induction. A key part of this process is an NQT's engagement with more experienced colleagues, and reflection on the professional conversations that take place regarding their own professional learning and practice. Through their engagement in the Droichead process at Ardscoil Mhuire, the NQT will:

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

Based on the above, the NQT will sign a joint declaration with the PST, stating that they have participated in a quality teaching and learning process.

*Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework, Teaching Council, March 2017*

## **NQT Responsibilities:**

In order to guide the NQT through Droichead in Ardscoil Mhuire, some suggested responsibilities are identified in **Appendix 2** of this policy. The PST of Ardscoil Mhuire will also share its roles and agreed responsibilities with the NQT at their initial meeting.

## Review

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

## Declaration

Date Developed:	Academic Year 2023/24
Developed by: PST, NQT & whole staff:	Academic Year 2023/24
Date Approved:	29 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
Ratified by:	Board of Management
Date effective from:	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
Review Date:	Academic Year 2025/26

Signed: Sr. Ena Quinlan  
Chairperson  
Board of Management

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024

## **Appendix 1**

### **PST Responsibilities at Ardscoil Mhuire:**

To guide a PST in its role, some suggested responsibilities are identified below. While responsibilities relating to support and mentoring relate to all team members, a PST may designate some of the other responsibilities to identified individuals within the team.

- To liaise with the PST members regarding inputs to staff on the Droichead process.
- To provide induction and co-ordinate activities at the beginning of the process.
- To brief school staff, parents and the Board of Management on the nature and purpose of the school's involvement in Droichead.
- To provide professional and pedagogical support for the NQT.
- To provide relevant documentation to the NQT at the beginning of the Droichead process.
- To support the PST members and NQT/s.
- To outline the PST's and NQT's roles and responsibilities at the initial meeting.
- To liaise with other staff members in relation to opportunities for the NQT to visit/observe in their classrooms and work alongside them.
- To enable and empower the NQT to seek/source answers to questions.
- To brief the NQT on the nature and purpose of the Droichead process within the school.
- To provide support for planning and preparation for teaching and learning by NQTs.
- To establish clear boundaries for the PST/NQT relationship.
- To clarify school policies and procedures for the NQT.
- To attend Droichead professional development and report back to staff and PST on any updates
- To work in partnership with the NQT in the classroom e.g. observation and discussion.
- To liaise with the Droichead Induction Division Associate/Professional Learning Leader (PLL).

- Where practical, to liaise with other schools in the area for the purposes of observing and sharing practice.
- To accept and give feedback in a constructive, open and professional manner.
- To co-ordinate the overall Droichead process in collaboration with the PST members and the NQT, including communicating meeting schedules and agendas.
- To keep records as part of the Droichead process.
- To form a consensus in relation to the joint declaration and signing of Form D, if appropriate
- To co-ordinate the conclusion of the Droichead process with the NQT and other PST members.
- To ensure that the Droichead process is carried out appropriately in the school and to develop, monitor and review a whole-school policy on induction of NQTs.

## Appendix 2

### NQT Suggested Responsibilities at Ardscoil Mhuire:

To guide the NQT in their role, some suggested responsibilities are identified below:

- To apply for Droichead via the 'My Registration' portal on [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie), retain the confirmation email and forward a copy to PST.
- To attend one cluster meeting per term as per the indicative timeframe agreed with the PST.
- To ensure Form D is fully completed before sending to the Teaching Council.
- To reflect on and evaluate practice regarding the Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct.
- To be aware of the continuum of professional development and their own responsibilities therein.
- To participate fully in the school's induction programme and to undertake all elements of the programme.
- To work in partnership with the school team.
- To be aware of all school policies and procedures.
- To observe more experienced teachers' practice and be observed by the PST.
- To learn from the established good practice of teachers in the school and/or elsewhere.
- To consider the professional feedback of the Principal, PST and other staff who advise about teaching and learning.
- To accept and give feedback in a constructive, open and professional manner.
- To be thoroughly prepared for all lessons and to have long and short-term planning available and up to date.
- To develop a reflective professional portfolio, Taisce, which will provide a focus for professional conversations central to Droichead and allow the NQT to identify areas in which they may need support or guidance. It may be created as a hard copy or electronic document which supports the process of reflection begun at HEI level.

- To collaborate with the PST to identify area(s) of interest for future professional learning (Cosán).
- To attend professional development sessions and contribute to group learning by participating fully.
- To be fully cognisant of their duty of care to all students in the school.
- To accept responsibility for seeking help and advice.
- To maintain the school's professional ethos in terms of appearance and conduct.
- To reflect with the PST, participate in a quality teaching and learning process and sign a joint declaration (Section 2 - Form D), as appropriate.