



Tullamore Educate Together N.S.
Ag foghlaim le chéile an Túlach Dhor.

Newly Qualified Teachers Policy

Tullamore Educate Together NS

March 2026

Introduction:

This Droichead Policy relates to the induction process for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in Tullamore ETNS. The Droichead process is an integrated professional induction framework for 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.

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 *Droichead*.
- 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, Tullamore ETNS is a school offering *Droichead* as a route of induction for newly qualified teachers (NQTs).

Scope:

This Induction Policy applies to all Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) partaking in *Droichead* at Tullamore ETNS. It also applies to management and members of the Professional Support Team (PST).

Aims:

The policy aims:

- To provide professional support and advice to NQTs.
- To build on the knowledge, skills and competences developed during the initial teacher education stage.
- To support the new teacher to feel that he/she is a valuable member of staff with an important contribution to make
- To ensure the teacher becomes familiar with their surroundings and the day-to-day running of the school in order to carry out their work successfully.

The Droichead Process:

- Droichead takes as its starting point the areas for further learning which have been identified by the NQT, in collaboration with the HEI (Higher Education Institution), as part of the extended school placement.
- This process includes a period of supported professional practice in the classroom, school-based professional learning activities, as well as other additional professional learning activities to meet the needs of teachers as they begin their careers.
- The main objective of the Droichead process is to support the professional learning of NQTs during the induction phase, thus laying the foundations for subsequent professional growth and learning in the next phase of their career.
- 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.

- When an NQT is employed in a participating school in an eligible setting (see Section 3) and for the minimum period of professional practice (see Section 4), they register for the Droichead process via the "My Registration" portal on www.teachingcouncil.ie.
- 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:
 - Attendance at NQT cluster meetings in local education centres, and
 - One other professional learning activity, related to the needs of the NQT (see Section 6)

Roles & Responsibilities:

Professional Support Team (PST)

The PST is a team of fully registered teachers from the school who work collaboratively to support and mentor the NQT(s) during school-based induction, in the first stages of their professional journey. All PST members have completed a programme of professional learning with NIPT, including mentor skill development.

The members of the school Professional Support Team (PST) are:

Laura Garry/ Tara O'Brien/ Michelle Cleary/ Darren Fahy/ Ellen Lynch/ Ultan Casey

Supporting a NQT during Droichead is always a collaborative process, and the roles and responsibilities for such are outlined below.

1. PST Roles

The dual role of the PST is to:

- Guide and advise the NQT throughout 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

2. PST Responsibilities

The responsibilities agreed by our PST are as follows:

- Ensure that relevant Droichead materials are agreed before engaging in the process
- Agree Droichead outline with each NQT
- Enable the NQT to be proactive when identifying emerging professional needs and supports required
- Co-ordinate working with the NQT using the emerging Needs Analysis / Induction Plan
- Organise Droichead Release Time for induction activities
- Professional and pedagogical support for the NQT
- 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
- Brief school staff / Board of Management on the nature and purpose for the school's involvement in Droichead
- Liaise with other staff members in relation to opportunities for the NQT to visit/observe in classrooms and work alongside them

- Keep relevant records
- Form a consensus in relation to the joint declaration and sign Form D (the NQTs official document recording the Droichead process which is their professional responsibility to fill in and maintain), if appropriate
- Review the process when it is concluded with an NQT

Our PST's responsibilities are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive and will be reviewed in light of experience. In support of a NQT's Droichead process, the PST will invite the wider school staff to provide opportunities for the following activities:

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

NQT Role

Supporting an NQT through Droichead at Tullamore ETNS 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 on their own 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 / students
3. 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, that they have participated in a quality teaching and learning process.

NQT Responsibilities:

To guide the NQT in their role at Tullamore ETNS, some suggested responsibilities are identified in Appendix 1 of this policy. The PST will share its roles and agreed responsibilities with the NQT at their initial meeting.

Duration of professional practice required.

Professional practice requirements for engaging in the Droichead process includes (i) extended school placement (10 weeks) during initial teacher education and (ii) post-qualification practice.

Teachers must complete a block of 60 consecutive school days in an eligible setting from the date on which they were first appointed to a post recognised for Droichead purposes. The teacher must apply for the Droichead process via the "My Registration" portal on 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 his or her school over and above the minimum requirements set out above, that extra time be used to support the Droichead process.

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 particular 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 two 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.

Taisce – Portfolio-based learning:

Portfolio-based learning is an important process to support the NQT in engaging in these professional conversations. The Council uses the term "Taisce" 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.

Protocols:

This policy adheres to the protocols identified in the Droichead – The Integrated Induction Framework, Teaching Council, March 2017. It 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

Timetable for Review:

This policy will be reviewed in 2026/27 and biannually thereafter. The review will be led by members of the PST and the Principal.

Ratification & Communication: The policy will be shared with the whole staff, with opportunities for input before being circulated to the members of the Board of Management.

The date from which the policy will apply is the date of adoption by the BoM. Implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Principal of the school.

Signed: Sharon Morgan
Chairperson of the BOM

Date: 23rd March 2026

Signed: [Signature]
Principal

Date: 23rd March 2026

Appendix 1

NQT Suggested Responsibilities at Tullamore ETNS:

To guide the NQT in their role, some suggested responsibilities are identified below. The PST will share its roles and agreed responsibilities with the NQT at their initial meeting.

- To apply for Droichead via the 'My Registration' portal on 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 fully completed before sending to the Teaching Council
- To reflect on and evaluate practice with regard to the Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct
- To be aware of the continuum of professional development and his/her own responsibilities therein
- To participate fully in the school's induction programme and to undertake the elements of the programme
- To work in partnership as part of a 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 he or she 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 engage in Action Planning in collaboration with the PST
- 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 the 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