



Droichead: Adding an External Member to a Professional Support Team (PST) in a Post-primary school

Sourcing an External Member to join your school's PST

In circumstances where a school is not able to establish a PST exclusively from within the staff, an external model is available. Principals may choose to establish a PST using a combination of the school's own staff and one external PST member. Please note there must be at least one member from the Newly Qualified Teacher's (NQT) school on the PST.

The Oide Droichead Induction Division has created a panel of fully trained PST members who are willing to act as an external member on another school's PST. Typically, these PST members have worked collaboratively as a part of a PST in their own school and have taken an NQT through the Droichead process.

To access the External Panel, the school principal should contact the Droichead Induction Team by emailing droicheadinduction@oide.ie. The Principal will then select an external PST member and invite them to join their PST. The school's context (e.g., Community and Comprehensive, DEIS, ETB, Gaelcholáiste, Voluntary Secondary School, Educate Together) and proximity to the external person will usually inform this selection.

Arrangements will be made at local school level to facilitate the external member's participation on the PST. Once the external PST member's appointment is confirmed and agreed, it is then up to the school to agree protocols with the external PST member regarding engagement with the process at school level.

The External Member working as part of the PST

The role and responsibilities of each PST member and the principal may differ from one school to the next and are therefore agreed before the Droichead process commences.

Supporting an NQT during their Droichead process is always a collaborative process. An external PST member usually interacts with the school a number of times for professional conversations with the other PST members and the NQT, and to engage in induction activities such as classroom observation and discussion. These interactions - actual and/or virtual - may include professional conversations with the other PST members and the NQT. The host school, in collaboration with the NQT and the external panel member, may explore the possibility of conducting a range of induction activities e.g., pre-observation and post-observation meetings, using appropriate software/technology.

Release Time

The external panel member should apply to droicheadinduction@oide.ie for the **Sanction for External Member Release Time Form** and receive an email from the Droichead Induction Division approving the application before confirming final details with the host school. An external panel member may avail of up to five hours release time if needed. This time is not taken from the host school's allocation. Release time must be used in the given academic year that the external PST member is supporting the NQT; it cannot be used in the following academic year.

Concluding the process

All PST members, including the external member, must have fully completed their PST training to be eligible to sign the joint declaration on Form D.

If you have any further queries in relation to the external panel, please contact droicheadinduction@oide.ie.