



IPPN Submission to Oide

Oide Strategic Plan

May 2024

Introduction

As the professional body for Irish primary school leaders, IPPN is focused primarily on enhancing leadership capacity, leadership effectiveness and leadership sustainability. It is that context that IPPN fully endorses and supports Oide's stated aim of providing school leaders (aspiring and existing) with accessible, inclusive, innovative and reflective professional learning opportunities which are quality assured. IPPN also fully endorses and supports the principle of recognising and supporting school leaders and teachers as agentic and committed professionals.

Accordingly, IPPN offers the following perspectives in order to inform Oide's strategic plan and the priority actions that may be included in that plan.

Greater Role Clarity

Reaching consensus on what it is that we want our school leaders to be doing in their role is imperative. That role clarity needs to be shaped around the behaviours of effective school leaders, many of which are evident within the standards in the Quality Framework for Leadership and Management.

The Process of Preparation and Induction

It is evident from the research that the learning experiences of the aspiring leader and the newly appointed senior leader are crucial to their successful progression and retention, and that this period in their leadership development warrants the highest quality of professional learning and targeted system support to ensure long-term sustainability in the leadership role.

In that context we offer the following -

- The overall objective should be to design a flexible preparation and induction process, which takes account of the differing needs of each individual newly appointed and newly practising principal.
- The preparation and induction programme should help to maximise the capacity to lead and inspire quality teaching and learning.
- It should offer opportunities for reflective practice, the setting of reasonable, achievable and sustainable goals.

Unleashing the Capacity of Deputy Principals

- Professional development programmes focused on developing a leadership vision for deputy principals, and specifically areas of co-leadership and co-responsibility should be further developed
- Mentoring and coaching programmes, currently offered to principals, should be expanded to include deputy principals.
- Elements of preparation and induction programmes for principals and for deputy principals should be delivered, with both attending together.

Developing and Embedding a Culture of Shared Leadership

IPPN believes that greater access to and engagement with team coaching would have a profoundly positive impact on the development of a shared leadership culture in our schools. IPPN proposes that the barriers to accessing team coaching be removed, and that the following modifications be made:

- Allow all schools to apply for access to team coaching regardless of whether the principal has engaged with one-to-one coaching.
- Increase the number of team coaching sessions from 4 to 8.
- Use the first two sessions for the principal, deputy principal and coach to establish an understanding of the needs of the school and what they wish to achieve.
- Allow all members of the leadership and management team to attend (restricting it to 6 people will be exclusive and less effective in schools where there are more than 6 members of the leadership management team).

Addressing Gaps in Provision

IPPN fully understands the remit of Oide, and that there are limitations to what can be included in its work. Nonetheless, there may be an opportunity as part of the strategic review process to look in their entirety at the professional development needs of teachers and school leaders that are currently not provided for by any agency, or that are not consistently available to all schools/leaders. The Steering Group may be in a position to engage with all agencies to identify gaps and to address shortcomings in provision.