

## *Droichead* NQT Voice Report

**Post-Primary**

2020 – 2021



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## Introduction

The National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) hosted five Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) Voice Events via Zoom in May 2021. 76 NQTs, from a variety of schools spread across the entire country, attended these events. An invitation was sent to every school and PST members were asked to encourage one NQT from each school to sign up to attend, as NIPT wanted an inclusive event that gave a true reflection of the *Droichead* process nationally. An NIPT Associate acted as note-taker at each event whilst two RDOs facilitated. The purpose of these events was to give NQTs an opportunity to reflect on their *Droichead* process and to feedback valuable qualitative data to the NIPT on all aspects of *Droichead*. It was made clear to participants that their feedback is not only valued but is used to help inform the NIPT on how to make changes to improve the process for NQTs in the future. Examples of how NQTs voice helped shape *Droichead* in the past were shared with NQTs to encourage full and honest engagement.

At each event NQTs had the opportunity to:

- Reflect on their *Droichead* process
- Meet with other NQTs and share their individual and collective experiences
- Review all aspects of the induction process and provide valuable qualitative data to inform NIPT on how to improve the *Droichead* process.

## Pre-Event Questionnaire

Prior to attending the NQT voice event, participants were asked to complete a pre-event questionnaire. 63 NQTs completed this questionnaire and their responses are detailed below.

### *Droichead* Process and Timeline

The first section of the questionnaire explored the duration of the respondents *Droichead* process.

- 60% of NQTs indicated that they had completed their *Droichead* process.
- A majority of NQTs completed their *Droichead* process in 2 or 3 terms, as shown in figure 1 below.

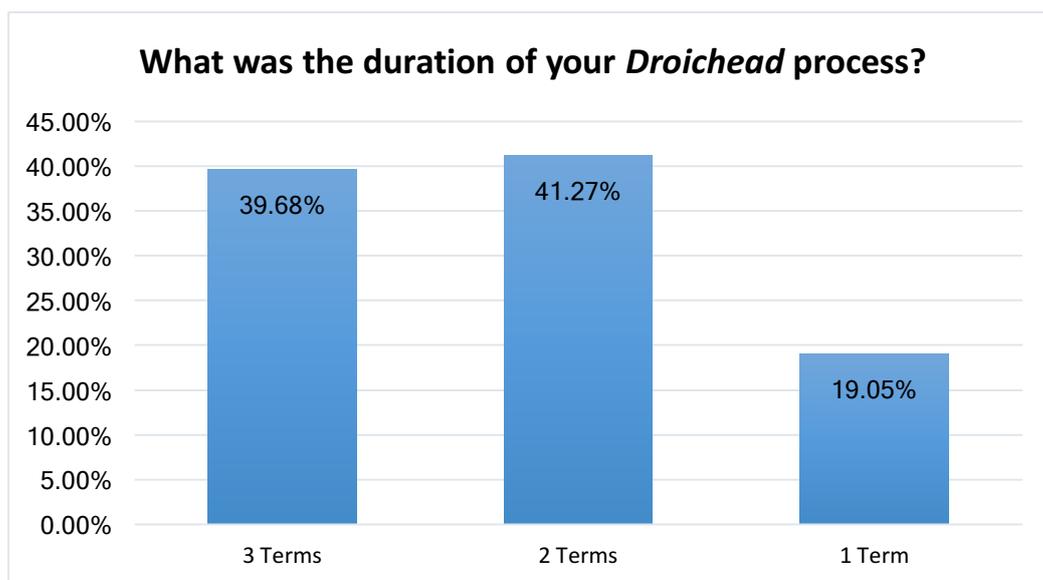


Figure 1: The duration of the *Droichead* process

- Almost 70% of NQTs (44) had a *Droichead* Outline Plan.
- Of these, 77% of NQTs, [54% of all respondents] indicated that their *Droichead* Outline Plan was designed in collaboration with their PST. This is shown in figure 2 below.

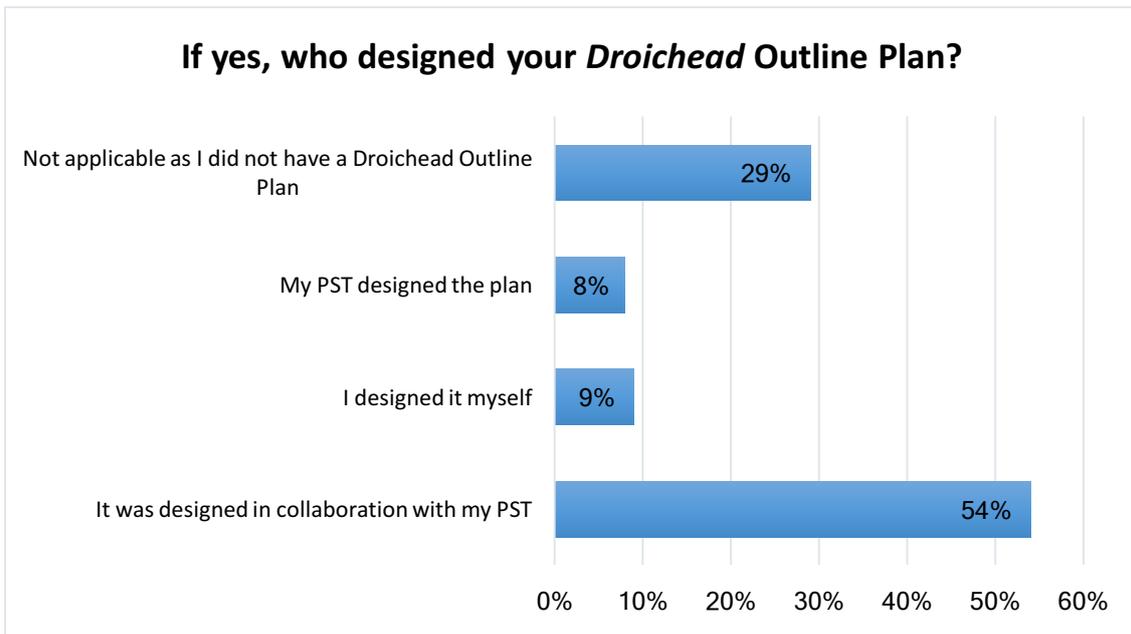


Figure 2: Who designed the Droichead Outline Plan

- 37% of NQTs needed additional time beyond their agreed *Droichead* Outline Plan.
- A majority of NQTs worked with 2 PST members during their *Droichead* process as shown in figure 3 below.

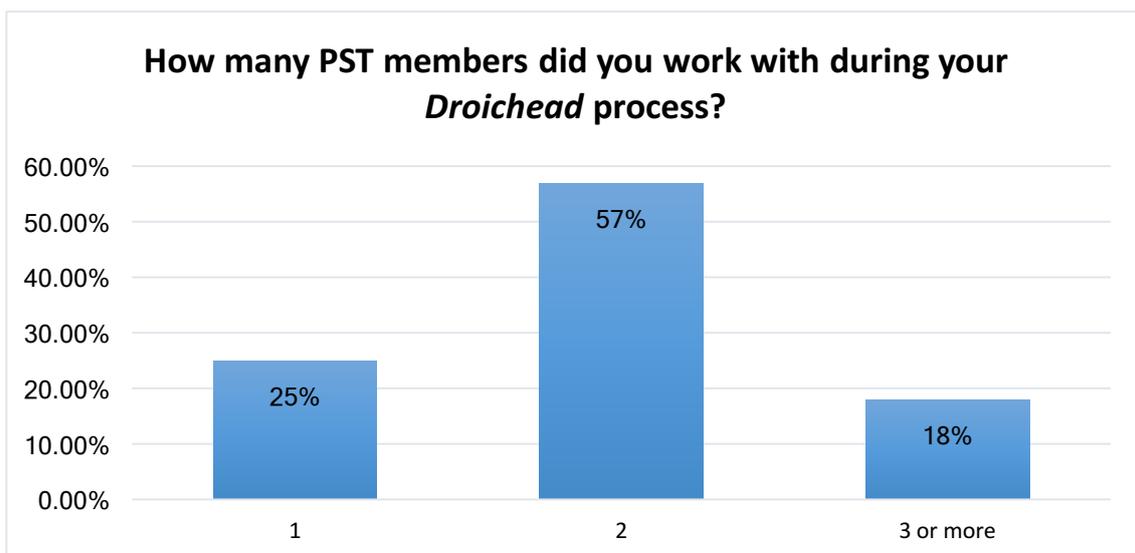


Figure 3: The number of PST members that NQTs worked with during their Droichead process

## NQT Concerns and Supports

Participants were asked to identify the support and guidance that they received and the professional conversations that they engaged in during their *Droichead* process.

As can be seen in figure 4 below, differentiation, classroom management and supporting students with SEN were the top three concerns of NQTs during their first year of teaching.

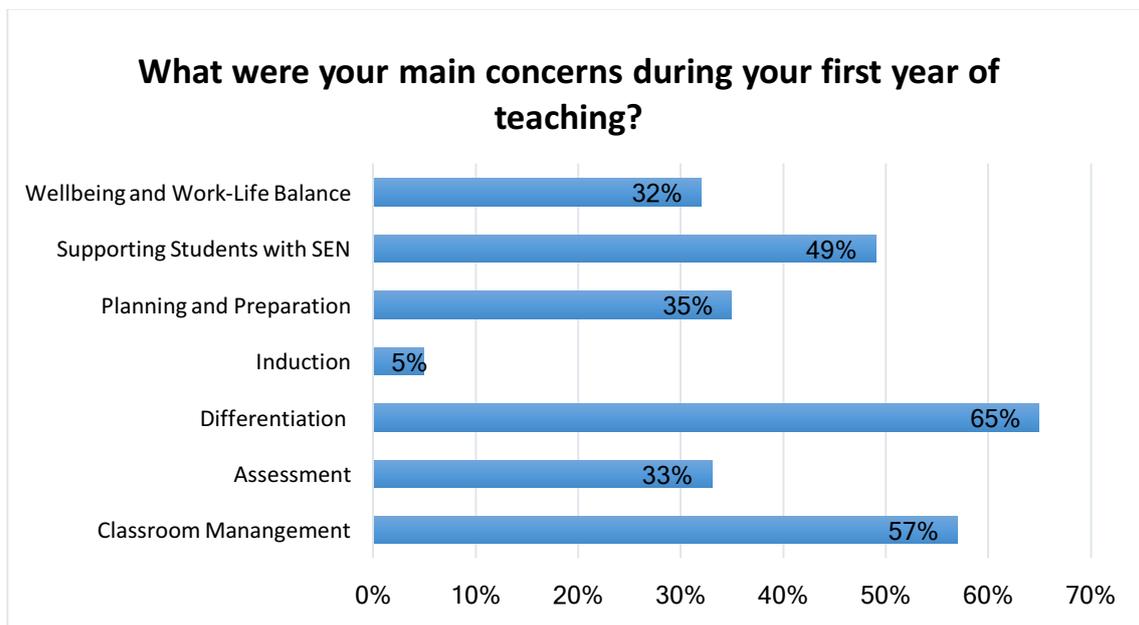


Figure 4: The main concerns of NQTs during their first year of teaching

As shown in figure 5, a similar proportion (68%) of NQTs identified their needs by reflecting on their own practice and/or in consultation with their PST.

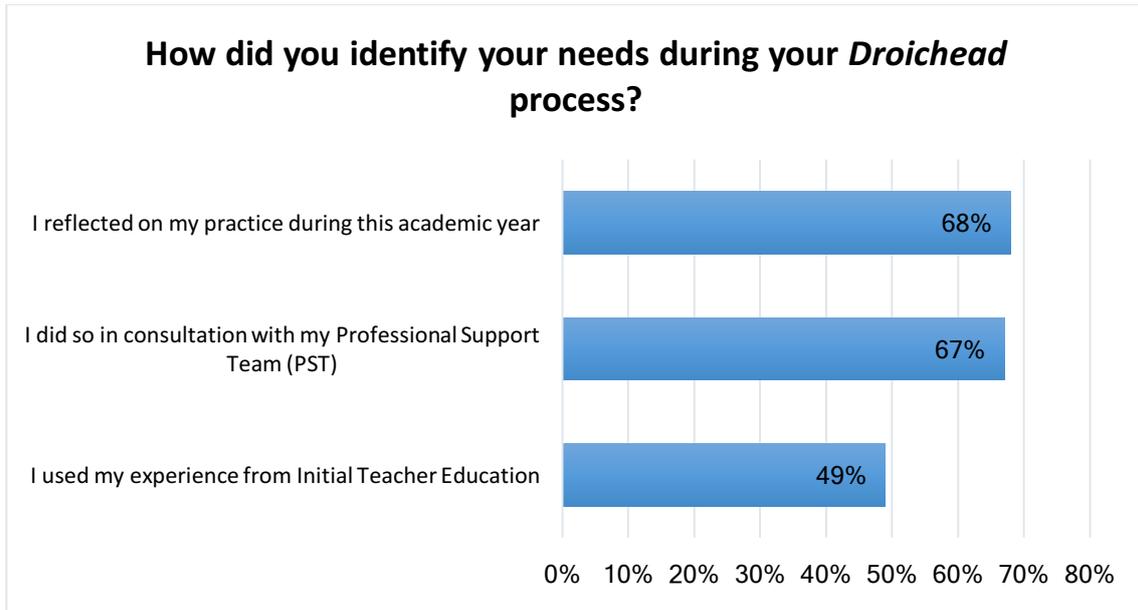


Figure 5: How NQTs identify their needs during their *Droichead* process

NQTs most frequently sought support from their PST, subject department and/or other colleagues as shown in figure 6.

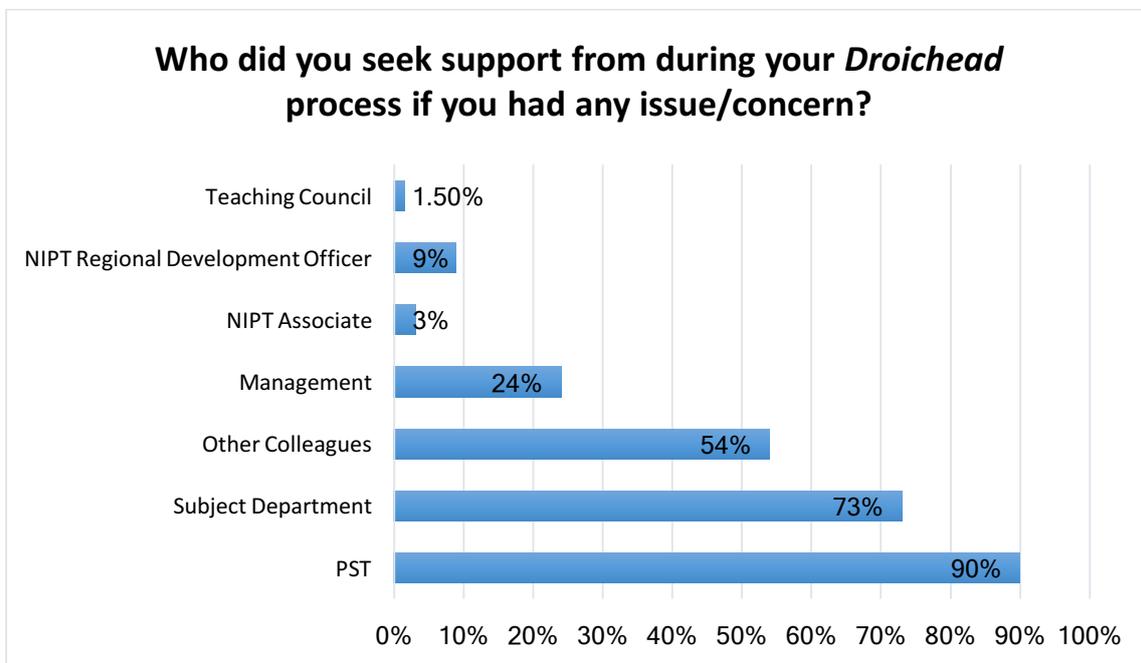


Figure 6: Who NQTs seek support from during their *Droichead* process

Finally, supports received by NQTs during their *Droichead* process included:

- Advice and guidance from PST members and other colleagues
- Subject specific advice
- Advice on classroom management
- Guidance on planning
- Feedback as part of lesson observation
- Specific resources useful for teaching and learning.

## **Strand A: Induction Activities**

In this section of the survey, the types and timing of induction activities offered to NQTs in their schools was explored. Induction activities offered to NQTs included:

- Welcome meeting/tour of school
- Regular meetings with PST/professional conversations
- Lesson observation
- Team teaching
- Familiarisation with key school policies/IT platform used for remote teaching.

As can be seen below, 52% of NQTs stated that induction activities took place throughout the *Droichead* process.

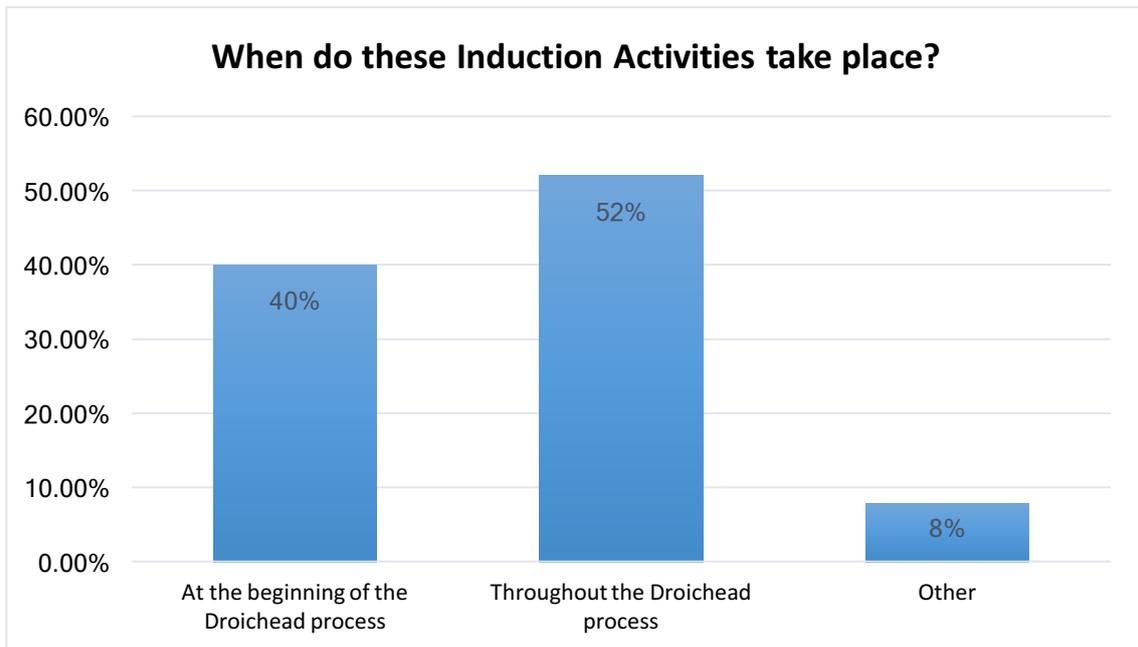


Figure 7: When induction activities take place

92% of NQTs believed that these induction activities met their needs as an NQT. The impact that these induction activities had on NQTs are as follows:

“I felt more comfortable with my school environment”.

“They had an immensely positive impact. I always felt comfortable, confident in my abilities and knowledge and supported by all members of staff and the school community”.

“Helped me to see a broad range of teaching methods and adapt these to my own classroom”.

“I have gained and benefited in many ways: I feel more empowered and confident in my own abilities and skills; I have benefited hugely in terms of classroom management approaches and techniques, and realising and addressing any possible pitfalls before they happen - if they do happen, I have different strategies and skills to deal with them; I have developed a much greater insight and knowledge into the teaching of my subject areas and planning and implementing for SEN differentiation within my lessons; I feel very much valued and part of a team”.

## Strand A: Professional Conversations

During the course of the *Droichead* process, an NQT has a number of interactions with experienced colleagues who are supporting the process. These are called professional conversations and were explored with the NQTs in this section of the survey.

- All NQTs responded that they had engaged in professional conversations during their *Droichead* process.
- Almost 60% of NQTs noted that these professional conversations occurred weekly, with the remaining indicating fortnightly or several times a month.
- As shown in figure 8 below, the majority of NQTs engaged in professional conversations with their PST.

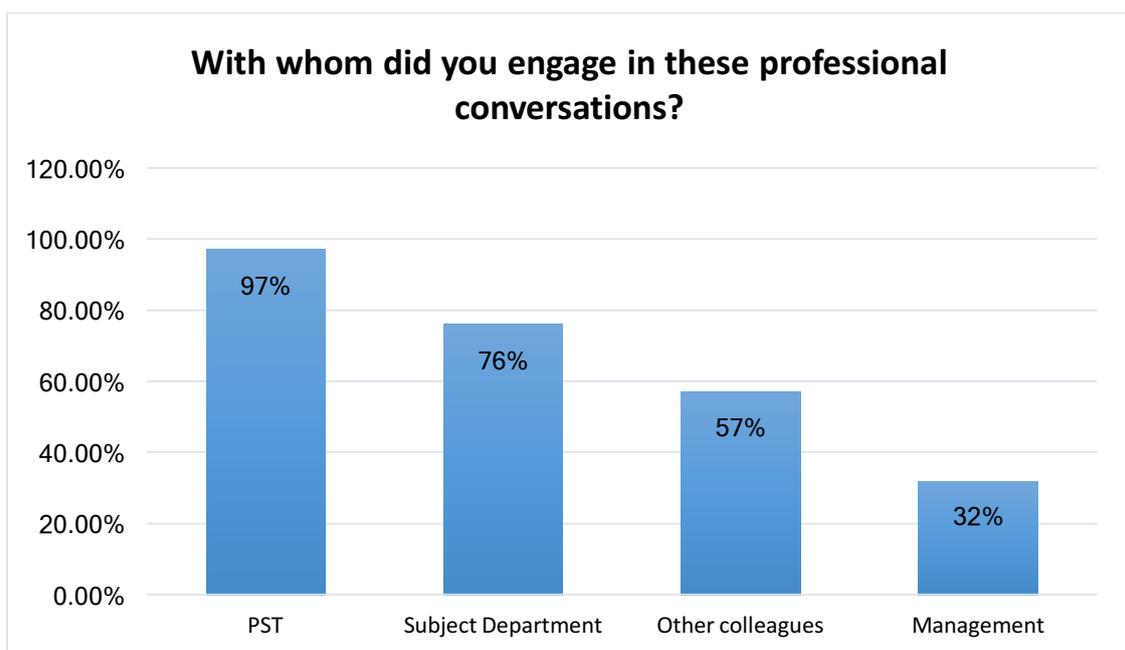


Figure 8: Who NQTs engage in professional conversations with

Topics of discussion included: classroom management, assessment, SEN, differentiation, planning, online learning, and subject specific issues.

NQTs indicated that the format of these conversations was:

|                                     |     |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Formal conversation                 | 5%  |
| Informal conversations              | 14% |
| Both Formal & Informal Conversation | 81% |

## Strand A: Observations

Observations are 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. This section focused on the structure, number, types and impacts of observations completed by NQTs.

As can be seen in figure 9, the majority of NQTs observed a combination of their PST and other experienced teachers.

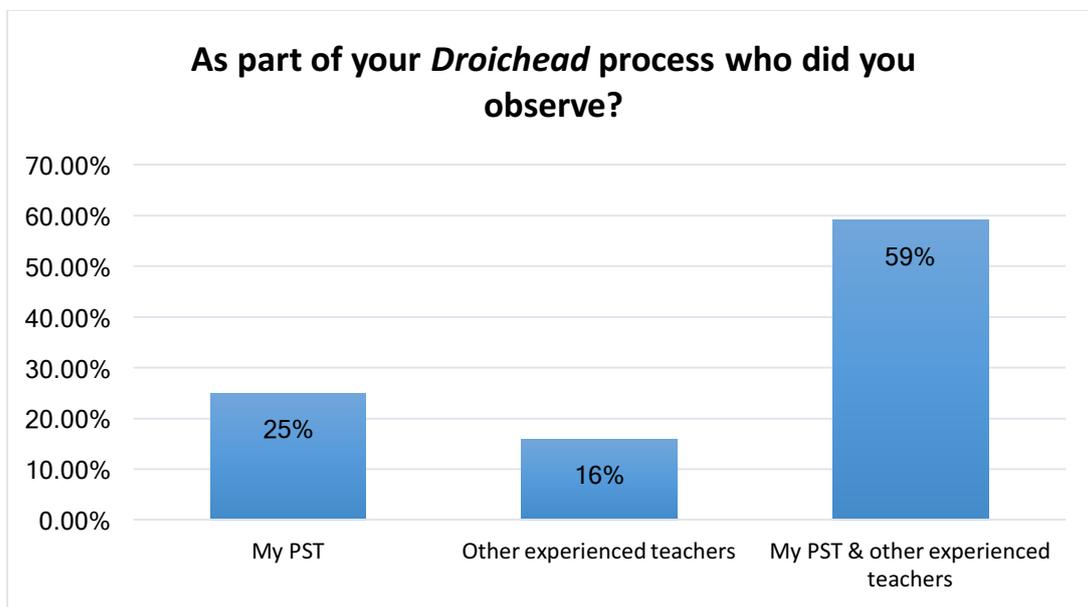


Figure 9: Who NQTs observed as part of their *Droichead* process

NQTs indicated that the number of observations that they did of their PST was:

| Number of observations of PST members | Percentage of NQTs |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1                                     | 32%                |
| 2                                     | 41%                |
| 3                                     | 16%                |
| 4                                     | 8%                 |
| 5 or more                             | 0%                 |
| 10 or more                            | 3%                 |

The number of observations of non-PST members by NQTs was:

| Number of observations of other teachers (non-PST) | Percentage of NQTs |
|--|--------------------|
| 1  | 37%                |
| 2  | 43%                |
| 3  | 5%                 |
| 4  | 5%                 |
| 5 or more  | 10%                |
| 10 or more   | 0%                 |

The number of observations of NQTs by PST members was:

| Number of observations of NQTs by their PST | Percentage of NQTs |
|---|--------------------|
| 1   | 5%                 |
| 2   | 75%                |
| 3   | 15%                |
| 4   | 5%                 |
| 5 or more                                   | 0%                 |
| 10 or more                                  | 0%                 |

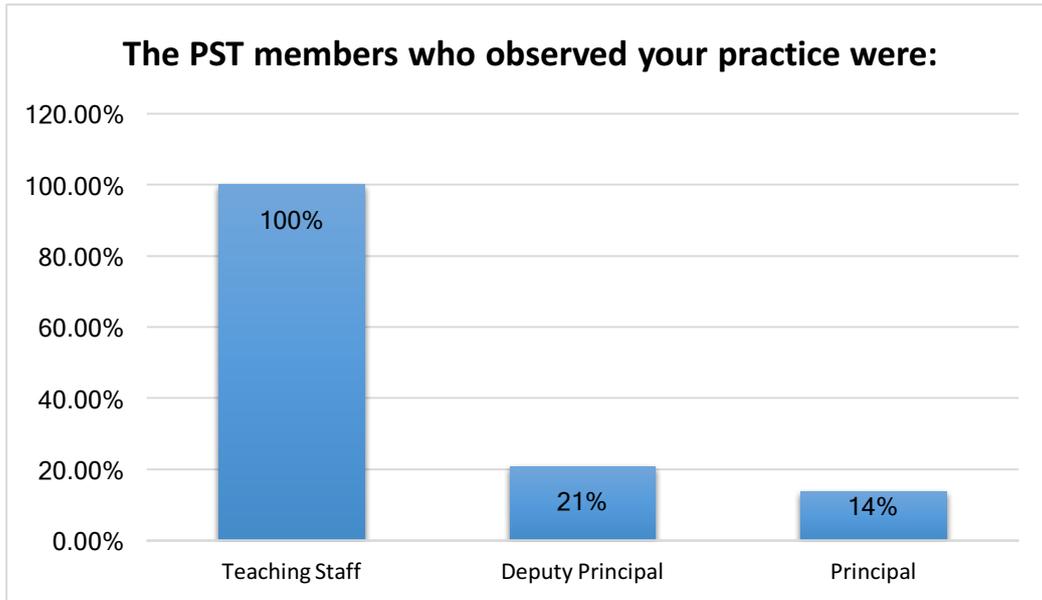


Figure 10: PST members that observed NQTs

As part of the observation process, below are the percentages of NQTs that engaged in:

- Pre-observation conversations – 94%
- Post-observation conversations – 98%
- Action Planning – 95%

56% of NQTs indicate that *Droichead* observations were organised in their own time as shown here:

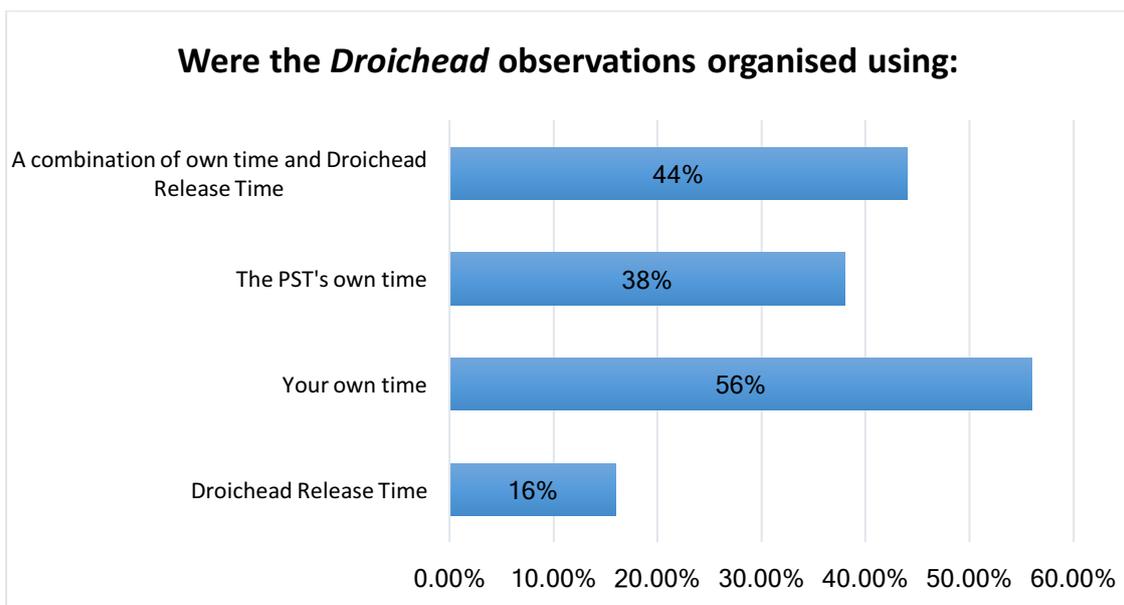


Figure 11: The organisation of *Droichead* observations

NQTs noted that *Droichead* observations had the following impacts on their professional practice:

“Receiving positive feedback really helped my confidence and reassured me that I was doing the best I could in the process of teaching and learning”.

“They allowed the opportunity to observe more experienced teachers in other subject disciplines whilst also providing a different approach to teaching methods”.

“It helped me build professional relationships with colleagues and my PST. It was also great to get ideas/tips from other teachers about how they plan their lessons”.

“I increased my reflective practice and became more aware of certain elements of my teaching pointed out to me by my PST members”.

“It improved my confidence to have another member of staff sit in my class and highlight the positives that she took from my lesson. It also helped me to become comfortable to ask for help when I did need it”.

NQTs described some challenges that they encountered while engaging in observations during the *Droichead* process:

“Finding suitable time in busy school week”.

“Some had to be completed during remote learning”.

“I found that the observations were most effective in my own subject area. Sometimes it can be difficult to see the cross curricular links”.

“Having another teacher in the room slightly unsettled some students in my classes”.

It is worth noting that the challenges around finding time and organising observations during the period of remote learning were the most frequently cited challenges in relation to observations during the *Droichead* process.

## Strand A: Reflections and Taisce

Engaging in Taisce allows NQTs to reflect on their professional learning, identify and plan for areas in which they may need further support or guidance. This section of the survey examined how NQTs reflected and how they recorded those reflections. NQTs used a variety of means to reflect on their professional learning. The following are their suggestions (from most to least popular):

- Personal journal/diary or other written record
- Professional conversations with a PST member/other experienced teacher
- Discussions with other NQTs
- Use of a Google Doc on Google Drive or other online format
- Voice recordings.

NQTs used the following methods to record their reflections (from most to least popular):

- A diary/journal/notebook/folder
- Typed in a word document (stored on PC) or a Google doc (stored online)
- Voice recordings.

NQTs were asked about sharing their reflections with their PST.

- 90% of NQTs discussed their reflections on their professional learning with their PST
- 46% of NQTs showed their Taisce to their PST.

The advice offered by respondents to NQTs completing their Taisce is:

“Keep on top of it, and write down everything no matter how big or small. Looking back on it is a great way to see how far you’ve come”.

“Choose a time each week and dedicate it to completing your reflections”.

“Compare reflections from week to week as it can reveal the progress you have made”.

“Be honest and don’t be afraid to acknowledge your strengths”.

“Keep a digital or physical copy close to hand so you can add to it quickly - you never know when inspiration will come to you”.

“Reflect on your teaching as much as possible and don't be afraid about making mistakes. It is a great learning tool and is great to look back on to improve your teaching”.

“To not worry about what way to present it - it can simply be reflections in a notebook or folder”.

“Remember it is for you, be honest and realistic”.

## Strand B: Cluster Meetings

NQTs engage in one cluster meeting per term. The number of cluster meetings an NQT must attend is determined by the duration of the *Droichead* process in consultation with the PST. This section of the survey sought to identify their experience of cluster meetings. Figure 12 shows the cluster meetings attended by NQTs.

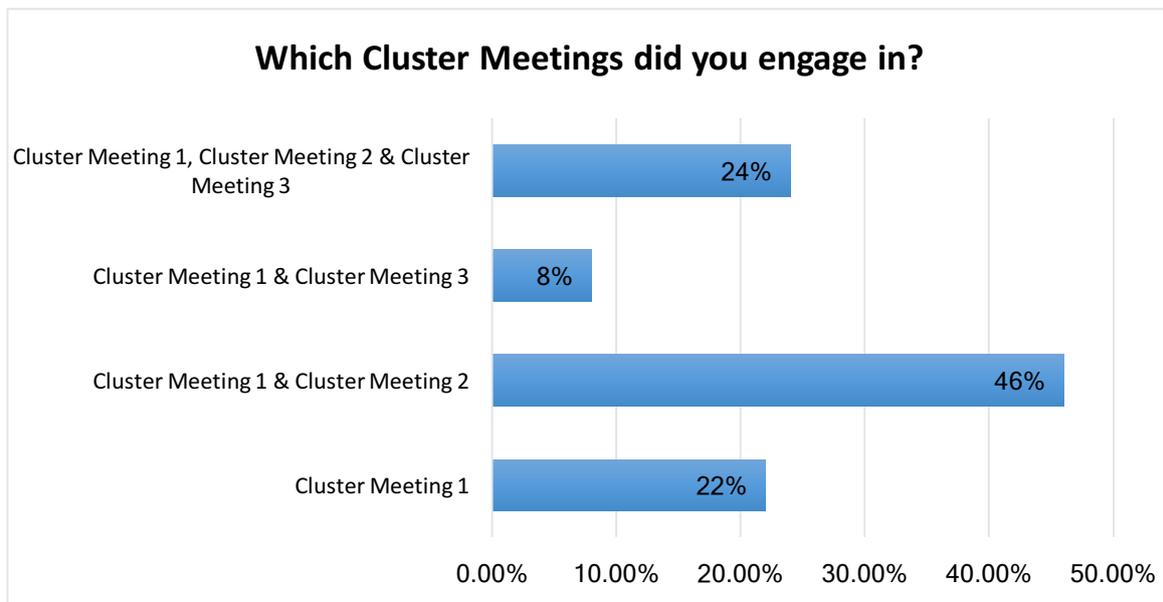


Figure 12: Cluster Meetings that NQTs engaged in

89% of NQTs evaluated the Cluster Meetings as ‘Helpful’ or ‘Very Helpful’ as shown in figure 13.

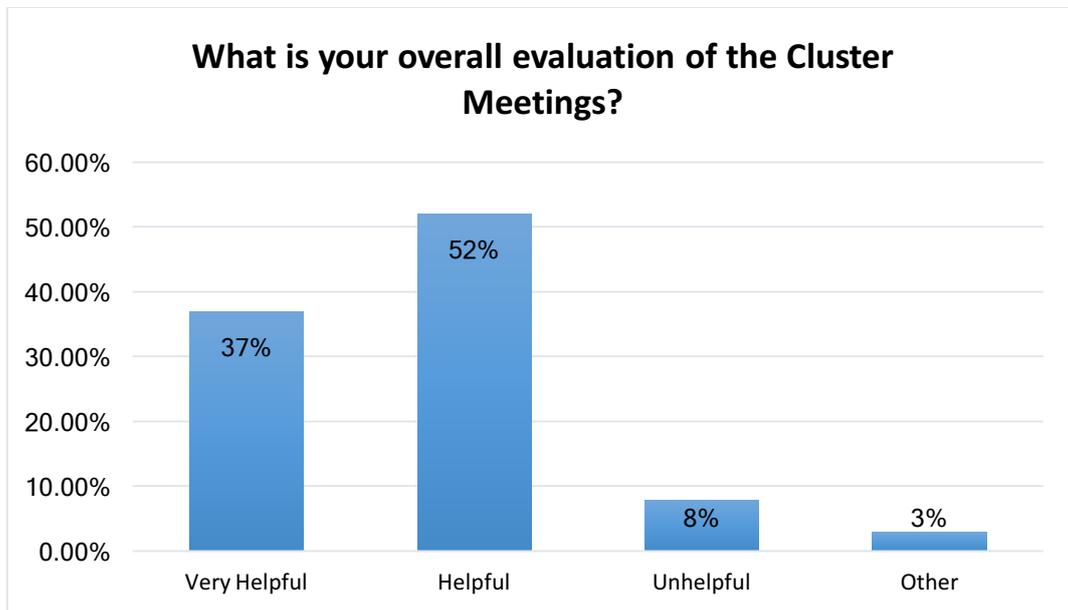


Figure 13: Overall Evaluation of Cluster Meetings

NQTs suggested the following impacts of the Cluster Meetings on their teaching (listed in order from most to least frequent):

“Helped me to speak to other NQTs and gain ideas from them and share our experiences which helped us to not feel alone when we may have struggled with a problem”.

“Gained in confidence and insight and felt reassured that any problems/concerns I might experience are not mine alone - some very helpful guidance and reassurance”.

“Developed my understanding of the *Droichead* process and what to expect”.

“Cluster meeting two was very beneficial - having the opportunity to talk with teachers from different schools and different subject areas was very helpful”.

NQTs would like to include following areas of support (from most to least frequent) in the Cluster Meetings:

“Methodologies and techniques on behavioural management”.

“More insight into online teaching”.

“More guidance on planning and differentiation”.

“I think networking with NQTs throughout the process would be more beneficial”.

Most NQTs did not have further recommendations for future Cluster Meetings. Those that did have further recommendations suggested the following:

“More time in breakout rooms with other NQTs as this was valuable”.

“Group NQTs in breakout rooms according to subjects (if possible)”.

“Samples of previous NQTs’ reflections and Taisce”.

## **Strand B: Professional Learning Activity**

NQTs must engage in additional professional learning activities as part of the *Droichead* process. This section of the survey explored how the professional learning activities were identified and if those activities supported the their professional learning needs.

NQTs engaged in the following professional learning activities:

- Subject specific CPD (40%)
- SEN, inclusion, dyslexia, autism etc. (28%)
- Online teaching and learning e.g. use of Google Classroom (8%)
- SSE, literacy and numeracy (8%)
- Féilte (5%)

The majority of NQTs chose their professional learning activity based on their professional learning needs as shown in figure 14.

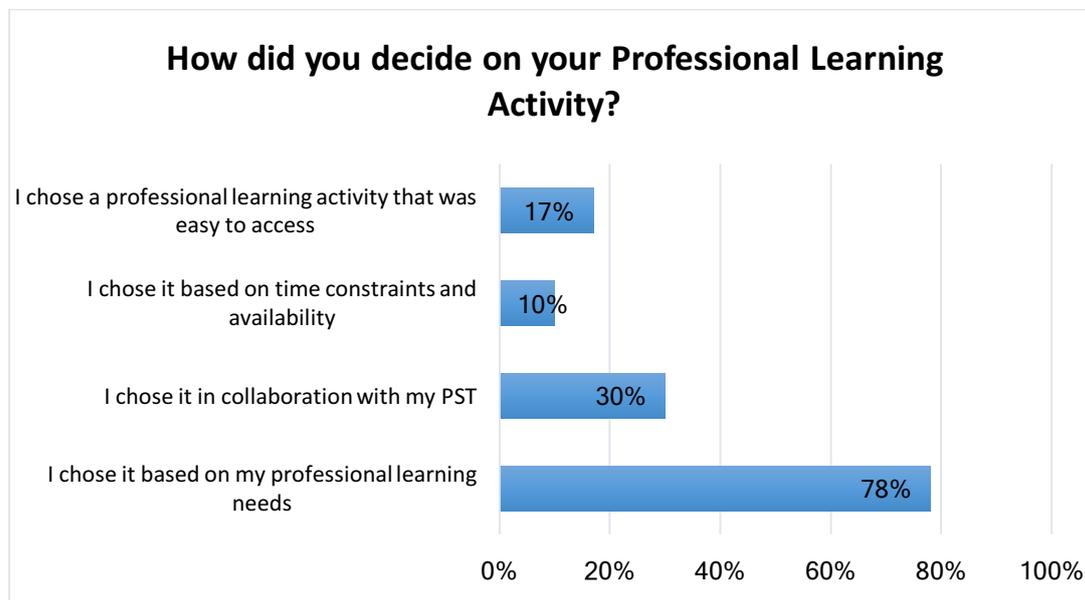


Figure 14: How NQTs decided on their Professional Learning Activity

NQTs noted that the professional learning activity had the following impacts on their teaching:

“Received a bank of resources for teaching”.

“It was really helpful when teaching online and really helped during the lockdown”.

“This day-long event exposed me to new ways of teaching the new Junior Cycle and helped me to connect with other Music teachers. I was able to build professional relationships which I believe are very important as an NQT”.

“Gave me ideas for my learning support classes”.

“It really made me reflect on the atmosphere and dynamic that I created in my classroom and made me ensure that I made my classroom a safe enjoyable place for all and that I remained compassionate and empathetic”.

“Identify engaging ways to teach certain topics”.

## Benefits and Challenges of the *Droichead* Process

The main objective of the *Droichead* process is to support the professional learning of the NQTs during the induction phase. This section of the survey intended to capture the benefits and challenges of the *Droichead* process for NQTs.

94% of NQTs identified ‘observations of experienced teachers’ as the most beneficial part of the *Droichead* process as shown in figure 15.

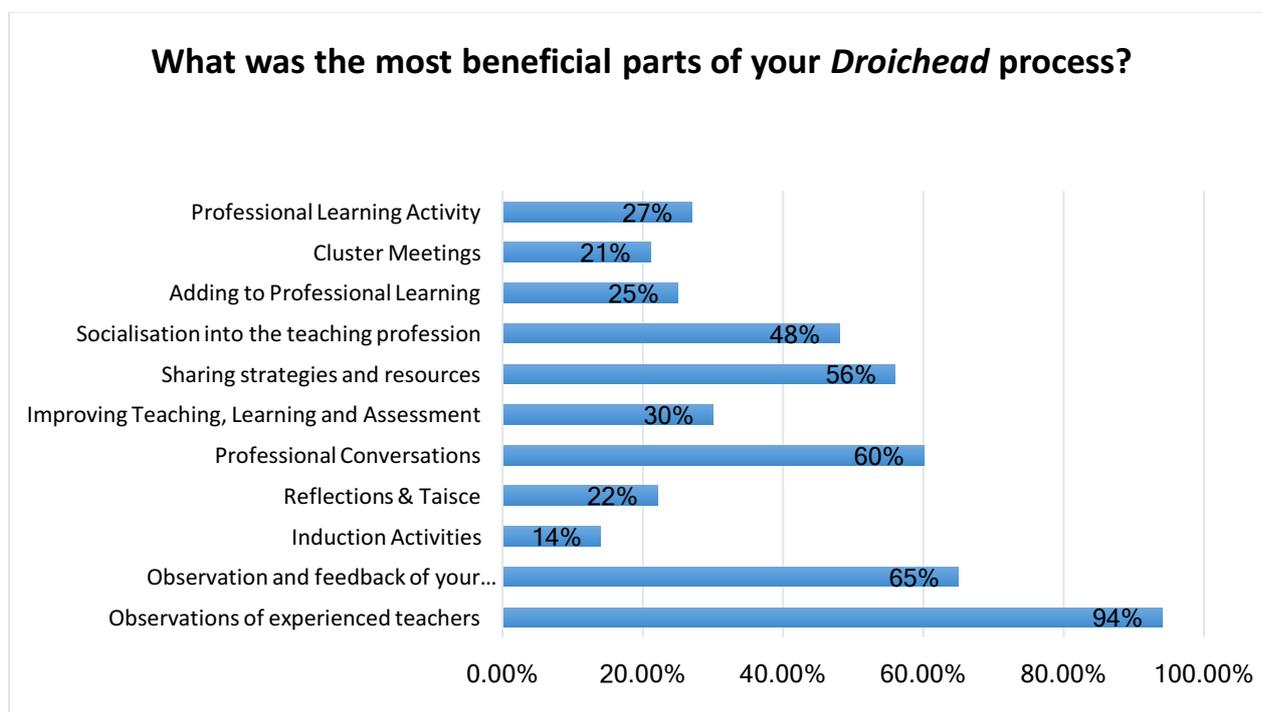


Figure 15: The most beneficial parts of the *Droichead* process for NQTs

NQTs suggested the following recurring themes (presented from most to least frequent) when describing challenges associated with the *Droichead* process:

“Time constraints and fearing of burdening teachers when asking to observe them”.

“The pandemic made it more challenging due to social distancing and masks and not being able to use all teaching methods”.

“Doubting myself as a teacher. However, it was great to have the support of my PST to guide me through the process and reassure me that everyone starts somewhere and teaching is a learning process”.

“Having the Cluster Meetings spaced far apart from one another”.

“Being nervous about PST observing my lessons”.

57% of NQTs would be interested in attending a ‘Refresh & Reflect’ event hosted by NIPT, as shown in figure 16.

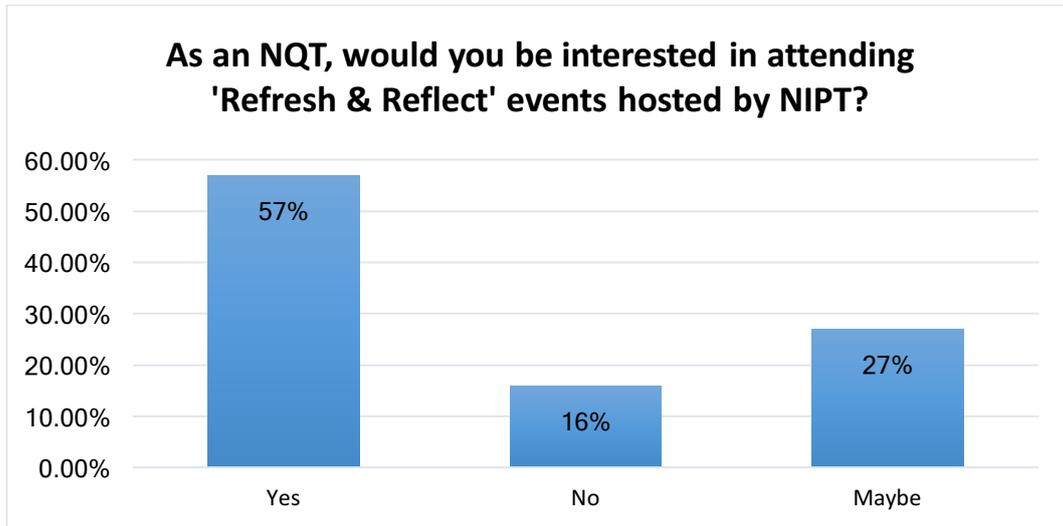


Figure 16: Interest expressed by NQTs in 'Refresh & Reflect' events

NQTs identified the following areas of interest for a ‘Refresh & Reflect’ event:

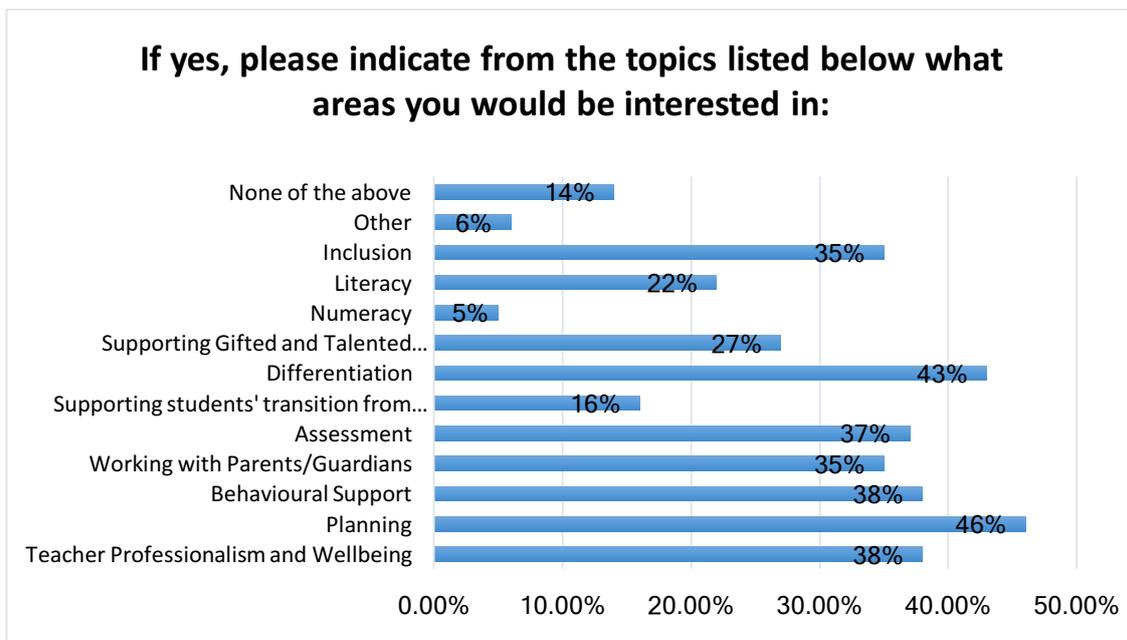


Figure 17: Areas of interest for 'Refresh & Reflect' event

Finally, the majority of NQTs did not have anything extra to share in the final question in the survey.

Of the few that did comment, the following are their suggestions:

“Online learning strategies”.

“This is probably not plausible but it may be an idea to get NQTs paired with a teacher who has completed the process in recent years and have them to call upon when in need of advice and just supporting them through the process”.

“It would be great to have some way of recognising casual subbing hours as part of the process”.

## NQT Voice Event

### Structure of the day

- NQTs gave 3 words to describe their *Droichead* process using a Mentimeter word cloud.
- NQTs ranked the following to prioritise the topics that they wanted to discuss:
  - Professional Conversations and Meetings
  - Observations and *Droichead* Release Time
  - Professional Learning Activities, Cluster Meetings and Taisce
  - Role of PST and Supports provided to NQTs
  - *Droichead* Records and Outline Plan.
- Breakout rooms on the top four topics were held at each event.
- A PMI was used to take the feedback from NQTs on each topic where they outlined the Positives, Minuses and Interesting aspects of their *Droichead* experiences. As the RDO took the feedback from each breakout room she opened the conversation to the floor, every NQT had an opportunity to voice their opinion on every aspect of their *Droichead* process if they wanted to contribute.
- Whiteboards were used where NQTs were asked to give advice to PST members and to NQTs starting their *Droichead* process.

### Mentimeter Activity

At the beginning of the NQT Voice Event, NQTs were asked for 3 words that described their experience of the *Droichead* process. They input this into a Mentimeter word cloud. The following are the word clouds for the 5 NQT Voice Events.

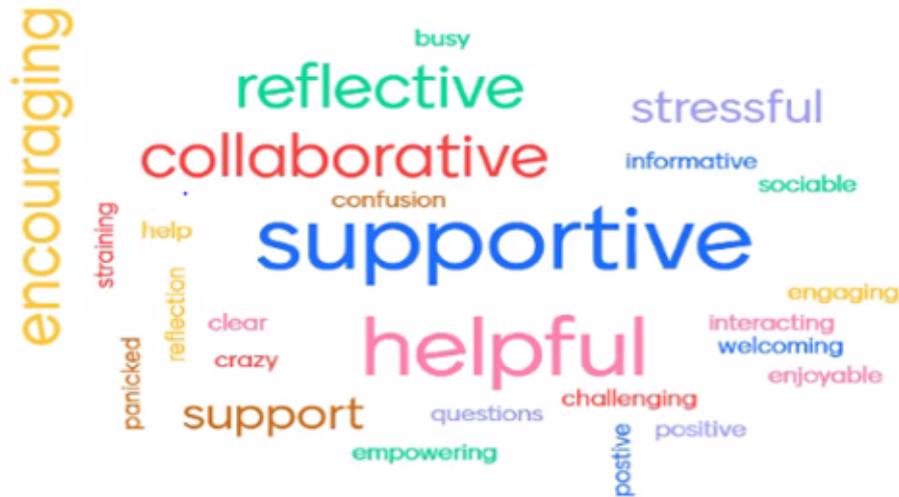


Figure 18: NQT experiences, Event 1



Figure 19: NQT experiences, Event 2



Figure 20: NQT experiences, Event 3



Figure 21: NQT experiences, Event 4



Figure 22: NQT experiences, Event 5

The words that described NQTs experience of the *Droichead* process most often were:

- supportive
- collaborative
- reflective
- positive
- reassuring
- feedback
- helpful
- daunting.

**The positive descriptors for NQTs were:**

Supportive, guided, helpful, beneficial, worthwhile, constructive, welcoming, mentored, guidance, interesting, working on the job, collaborative, interesting, reassuring, informative, achievement, opportunity, satisfying, accomplishment, great, fulfilling, development, secure, enlivening, relevant, insightful, NQT centred, surprising, structured, enjoyable, sociable, welcoming, interacting, relaxed and clear.

**The negative descriptors for NQTs were:**

Confusing, disorganised, apprehensive, overwhelming, panicked, nervous, time consuming, straining, panicked, crazy and challenging.

It is evident from the word cloud that NQTs, for the most part, found the *Droichead* process a rewarding, worthwhile process.

## Breakout Rooms

Prior to going into breakout room NQTs were asked to rank the following:

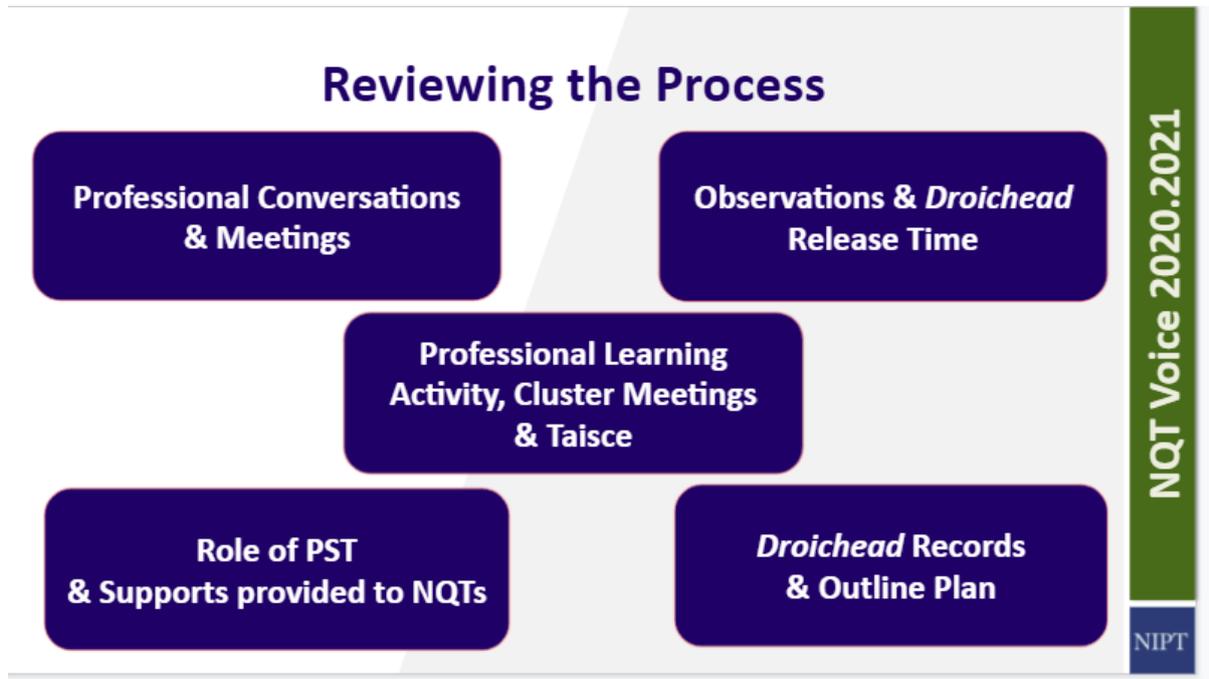


Figure 23: Reviewing the Process

Based on the rankings of the above headings, NQTs were put into breakout rooms and each group was given one of the above topics to discuss. They were asked to give their feedback using a PMI. The discussion gave NQTs the opportunity to reflect on and discuss their *Droichead* process collectively, naming the Positives, Minuses and Interesting aspects of their *Droichead* experience. As the RDO took feedback from each group the discussion was open to the floor for all NQTs to contribute. This created an open dialogue where everyone had the opportunity for their voice to be heard on each topic. The rankings varied in each NQT voice event where 4 out of the 5 topics were discussed, which allowed qualitative data to be gathered on all aspects of the *Droichead* process over the 5 NQT Voice Events.

## a. Professional Conversations and Meetings

### Prompt Questions used by the RDO:

1. Did you have any meetings during your *Droichead* process?
2. What was the format of these meetings (formal or informal)?
3. What was discussed in these meetings?
4. Did you have an input to the agenda?
5. Who did you have the initial meeting with?
6. Were the meetings held in your own time/in free periods or was *Droichead* release time (cover) provided?
7. What do you know about how the release time for *Droichead* was accessed?
8. What did you feel was the best way to use this release time?

### Observations and Quotes:

“I feel like we are now looked on as professionals”

“When discussing professional conversations one NQT said “It is less pressure, more flow, more comfortable and we are collaborating with one another”

| Positive   | Negative   | Interesting   |
|--|--|---|
| <p><b>Professional Conversations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Informal conversations with the PST were positive where NQTs are now looked on as professionals.</li> <li>● Feedback from PST was highly regarded by NQTs</li> <li>● NQTs felt like an equal because the PST are qualified and yet they were seeing new</li> </ul> | <p><b>Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Large schools found it difficult to have formal post observation conversations</li> <li>● No initial formal meeting with PST in some cases</li> <li>● NQT had to find out who the PST team were.</li> <li>● <i>Droichead</i> process learned about during</li> </ul> | <p><b>Agenda of meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● New PST members were more open to NQTs having input into the agenda of meetings whereas more experienced PST members had their own way of doing it. This was one response given when asked</li> </ul> |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>techniques the NQTs were using.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborating with PST was a huge benefit of the <i>Droichead</i> process</li> </ul> <p><b>Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal meetings were highly beneficial</li> <li>• 7/16 at one event, held regular meetings going through things like Taisce, PLAs, CPD, extracurricular activities and Planning.</li> <li>• Meetings were very structured, in some cases, goals for the year were set out, professional learning activity discussed, focus for observations defined. Check-in every month to see what progress was being made.</li> <li>• NQTs felt it's a good way to get to know staff members.</li> <li>• NQTs experienced a mixture of formal and informal conversations and meetings e.g. passing someone in the corridor or dropping an email to a member of their PST to clarify or discuss an issue such as PLA or Taisce.</li> <li>• NQTs felt that they had a lot of input into the program and felt no pressure with regards to observations.</li> <li>• All felt that the PST spread out the meetings well and yet met regularly. This meant that NQTs felt very supported and that the PST in each school seemed to be very accessible to NQTs</li> </ul> | <p>cluster meeting 1 and through friends in other schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to Covid-19 regulations, one NQT was unaware if there were other NQTs in the school</li> </ul> | <p>about input to the agenda of meetings.</p> |
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## b. *Droichead* Records & Outline Plan

### Prompt Questions used by the RDO:

1. What types of records were kept from the *Droichead* process? Which were most/least useful?
2. Were timelines clarified at the outset of your *Droichead* process? Did this change as the year progressed?
3. How did the PST use the *Droichead* standards and criteria to guide the process in your view?
4. If more than one NQT was in the school, do you think there was consistency in the way that *Droichead* standards were applied to you all?
5. What were the challenges/ benefits of using the standards and criteria?

### Observations and Quotes:

This was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in 4 of the 5 NQT Voice events and it was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> at one event.

| Positive   | Minus  | Interesting  |
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| <p><b><i>Droichead</i> Records</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some PSTs shared documents with NQTs on Microsoft teams. This was good for keeping track of everything. Teams kept everyone in communication. Observation templates and lesson plans were shared this way.</li> <li>NQTs were aware of the '<i>Droichead</i> folder'</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Outline Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NQTs had check-ins to see what stage they were at on their outline plan</li> </ul> | <p><b>Outline Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having an outline plan is challenging for those who are subbing as they do not know how long they will be in the school.</li> <li>At one event only 6/16 NQTs had an outline plan</li> <li>Some NQTs didn't get to do much record keeping with PST due to being in pods and restrictions.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some NQTs found working remotely easier. Everything was done via Google Drive and email</li> <li>Responses were quicker when staff were working remotely, and all information was there in an online folder.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Form D</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Even though some NQTs were finished, Form D could not be sent until all were finished the process as the school wanted a uniform end date. Some NQTs started in January and the other NQTs needed to wait.</li> </ul> |

## c. Role of PST & Supports provided to NQTs

### Prompt Questions used by the RDO:

1. How was the role of the PST clarified to you?
2. What was your experience of the different roles that individuals within the PST took on in *Droichead*?
3. What was your experience of whole school support for *Droichead*?
4. What is your understanding of an induction activity?
5. What induction activities did you engage in? And what did you learn from them on reflection?
6. If the Principal was not a PST member, what were the advantages/disadvantages to this?
7. If the Principal was a PST member, what were the advantages/disadvantages to this?

### Observations and Quotes:

“Informal conversations with PST members are where I learnt the most”

“Having a PST as a member of the same subject department was a huge advantage.”

PST: ‘building relationships is so important. One of the most important things about *Droichead* is getting support, feeling comfortable.’

“When students see you as part of the school community it is helpful with classroom management. “

| Positive  | Minus  | Interesting  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>PST</b>  | <b>PST</b>   | <b>PST</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● PST member in same subject department was helpful.</li> <li>● PST were a fantastic support to NQTs</li> <li>● PST - there was a good balance between help, support, and individual responsibility</li> <li>● Many NQT's were notified as to who the PST were during induction week.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The role could have been more clearly outlined at the start. 6/16 knew the role.</li> <li>● PST were senior members of staff and were very busy/ focused on getting the task done.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In the case where the PST was made up of senior staff members who were busy, there was also a mentor system in place which shows a blended, whole school approach to</li> </ul> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process was explained by PST swiftly and well</li> <li>• PST went through all the necessary forms</li> <li>• Being an NQT can be quite daunting, and the support of the PST is very welcome.</li> <li>• PST were very clear on their role</li> <li>• PST members were keeping an eye on other new teachers also.</li> <li>• Very supportive. Good that there was a meeting at the beginning of the year.</li> <li>• NQTs that were in schools with only one or two NQTs were delighted to get so much attention/support.</li> <li>• Some NQTs were assigned a specific PST member and they were linked with the other NQTs which they felt was ideal. NQTs found the peer support great.</li> <li>• Where there is 1 lead person on the PST and the other person was informal, this was beneficial.</li> </ul> <p><b>Principal as PST member</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having the principal as PST was identified as a positive because if they were going to observe you anyway it is killing two birds with one stone.</li> <li>• If the principal was not a member of the PST, it was great to talk to them from a different perspective.</li> <li>• If the principal was a member of the PST we got an opportunity to demonstrate our</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was only one other member of the PST, but another is being trained next year.</li> <li>• Not all PST members are as active.</li> </ul> <p><b>Principal as PST member</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having the principal as PST was not seen as beneficial to the process.</li> </ul> <p><b>Observations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some NQTs did their Observations in their own free time. 10 minutes at lunch time to meet PST as they were conscious of holding people up.</li> <li>• One NQT was preparing work and she was told to come to observe a PST member straight away. She wasn't aware that there was a bank of hours available for the <i>Droichead</i> process.</li> </ul> | <p>supporting NQTs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For one NQT who did not start at the beginning of September it took 3/4 weeks to identify who the PST were. Once this happened the PST were extremely supportive. This led to others who had started the process late also expressing that they had lost out on the introduction to the PST and the initial induction to the process which caused lack of clarity/understanding for them initially.</li> <li>• At one event 21% of NQTs were supported by only 1 PST member.</li> <li>• One NQT suggested having an NQT from the previous year as part of the PST team so the NQT currently participating in the <i>Droichead</i> process could have a "friendly face" and someone "more on their level." She felt that it could sometimes be "intimidating" working with the PST if the PST is comprised of the Deputy Principal and maybe only one other teacher. It was reiterated to the NQTs that the NQT is a</li> </ul> |
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| <p>professionalism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glad to be observed by a member of management as PST. It was a good opportunity so that I did not go under the radar.</li> </ul> <p><b>Induction Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Droichead</i> induction activities were amalgamated with general induction week</li> <li>• Great support was given from NQT subject departments also.</li> <li>• A lot of NQTs had informal support for Parent Teacher meetings</li> <li>• Induction activities included Extra-curricular, Christmas walk, Trad. group, showing NQTs around, classroom management, restorative practice training with help from PST.</li> <li>• Induction Day/Induction Activities were mainly at the start of the year.</li> </ul> <p><b>NIPT Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from NIPT has been very positive. One NQT voiced how positive her experience was with NIPT and how she got massive support from the Dublin West Centre, from her RDO and Admin.</li> </ul> | <p><b>PME - Information about Droichead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the PME, the term <i>Droichead</i> was thrown out there, but nobody really knew what it meant</li> <li>• NQTs were only told last month/day of college about <i>Droichead</i>. They felt there is not enough information on it before you start your job. Some NQTs said they got their information from NQTs from the previous year that they knew.</li> </ul> | <p>colleague rather than a student and is a peer of everyone.</p> <p><b>Induction Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We weren’t really sure what the Induction activities were. Was it just the pack at the beginning? We didn’t realise that they could occur at any time of the year based on emerging needs.”</li> <li>• Word of mouth for <i>Droichead</i> Process where some NQTs learned about the process from last year’s NQTs</li> </ul> <p><b>Principal/deputy as PST member</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal not PST member could be positive or negative.</li> <li>• Both Principal and deputy on PST.</li> </ul> <p><b>Whole School Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nobody mentioned whole school support</li> </ul> |
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## d. Taisce, Professional Learning Activity & Cluster Meeting

### Prompt questions used by the RDO:

1. What Additional professional learning activity (PLA) did you engage in? Why?
2. How did the PLA impact on your teaching?
3. Were there any other NQT supports outside of *Droichead* and the school that you accessed that were supportive and helpful during the *Droichead* process?
4. What form of Taisce was used?
5. What is good about the Taisce?
6. Did you 'show' or 'present' the Taisce to your PST. If so how?
7. How did you find the cluster meetings? Were they of use?
8. In your opinion which format: Cluster Meeting 1 via the online platform or Cluster Meeting 2 via zoom was most beneficial?
9. Did the Cluster Meetings impact your teaching as an NQT?

### Observations and Quotes

"Whether it is reflections on online/in class observations, conversations or records of courses you have done, keep it as a record for interviews."

"I found the SEN course really good and beneficial online, you could pace, pause, research and collaborate with other teachers. It was brilliant for the *Droichead* process and me professionally."

"The SSE workshop was brilliant, you could do it at your own pace and focus on the area you want to focus on."

| Positive   | Minus  | Interesting  |
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| <b>Taisce</b>  | <b>PLA</b>   | <b>Cluster meetings</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Taisce was great to show your journey.</li> <li>● Taisce could be used as a tool to prepare for interviews</li> <li>● Taisce gave NQTs opportunity to learn from their reflections</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One group reported that they all did different PLAs but as they were just out of college, they felt it was similar to their PME.</li> <li>● The professional</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● "I liked the pre-recorded session because of my family circumstances. Could there be a choice or a combination?"</li> <li>● NQTs preferred the</li> </ul> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not having a set format for Taisce was a nice change from college and gave NQTs freedom to reflect as they wanted.</li> <li>• NQT's found it good to have professional conversations around key moments</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>PLA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PDST courses were very helpful, and many felt it was great having them online and some felt they engaged more online.</li> <li>• Those that attended the NIPT workshops found them helpful. High praise was expressed for the SEN and SSE workshop.</li> <li>• A 5-week SPHE workshop was recommended as a PLA</li> <li>• It can be an opportunity to get involved in something outside of your subject area e.g., wellbeing</li> <li>• "I went to a music conference and I had a question about certification. Good to know that it is based on trust."</li> <li>• "I chose an online workshop on Assessment and Evaluation on Teacher Induction website, and it was very beneficial for my classroom practice."</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cluster Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NQT's liked having the opportunity to talk to other NQTs at the cluster meetings especially in the</li> </ul> | <p>activity is not beneficial if it is not authentic and related to the needs of the NQT at that time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time pressure can be an issue</li> <li>• Lack of clarity around what a PLA can be.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cluster Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a lot of content in CM1 that was repetitious to what the PST had told them.</li> <li>• One NQT felt CM2 had a lot of information coming at you, where some of it went over her head and it was a little overwhelming trying to take it all in online.</li> <li>• Another NQT felt Cluster meeting 1 was telling them what they already know as this information was given by PST.</li> <li>• Cluster Meeting 1 on Moodle crashed for a few people, and they had to complete it twice or three times.</li> </ul> | <p>experience of CM2 and found it to be more beneficial than CM1 due to it crashing twice and, in some cases three times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6/16 at one event said they enjoyed CM2</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>PLA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15/16 NQTs at one event, decided on the PLA themselves.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Taisce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 50% said they shared elements of their Taisce with the PST. They didn't submit the element, but they had a conversation around it.</li> <li>• One NQT used Mentimeter to record her Taisce. She wrote how she was feeling and at the end of the year had a word cloud of feelings.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Induction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction was for many an informal professional conversation at the beginning of the year.</li> </ul> |
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| <p>year that is in it, as it is difficult in schools to meet and chat with staff members due to Covid-19 restrictions meaning there are 3/4 staff rooms in some schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Zoom was preferred over Moodle as a platform</li> <li>● Cluster meeting 2 in particular was seen as a good way to reflect.</li> <li>● “I found the pre-recorded CM1 very useful as I could do it in my own time”.</li> <li>● “I liked CM2 and found the discussion in the breakout rooms very useful. It was very reassuring that others had similar issues.”</li> <li>● “I preferred CM2 and CM3 and found it much better to interact with others as opposed to listening to a pre-recorded session.”</li> <li>● NQTs said it was very convenient to have Cluster Meetings online as it cuts out the commute after school and yet “could still liaise, network and engage with others” while it was also “time-saving”.</li> <li>● “CMs were the ideal opportunity to speak to others at the same stage as yourself.”</li> <li>● NQTs found Cluster Meetings “very beneficial.”</li> </ul> |  |  |
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## e. Observations & *Droichead* Release Time

### Prompt questions used by the RDO:

1. Tell us about the observations that you were involved in as part of *Droichead*. What format did they take? Experienced teachers observing you? You observing experienced teachers? How many?
2. What planning was involved beforehand? Was there an opportunity for feedback afterwards?
3. How did the observations process impact on your teaching?
4. What in your view was most beneficial about the observations that took place?
5. Would you suggest any changes for the observation process for the future as an NQT?
6. Were the observations held in your own time / in free periods, or was *Droichead* release time (cover) provided.
7. What do you know about how the release time for *Droichead* was accessed?
8. What did you feel was the best way to use this release time?
9. What recommendations would you have for other schools in respect of using the release time?

### Observations and Quotes:

“I thought observations online was less tension, less stress as PST unseen.”

“Unnecessary fear overcomes you before observation happens as it is engrained from the PME.”

“I’m in a large hectic school and there was not really an opportunity for pre chat and post observation wasn’t happening immediately afterwards, though I still got benefit from it.”

“Formal post observation meeting was really helpful because something that is written on a page you could take it up.”

| Positive   | Minus   | Interesting  |
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| <p><b>Observations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback online was easy because it was done straight after the observed class.</li> <li>• 6/16 NQTs at one event did online observations</li> <li>• NQTs felt less pressure being observed online as PST members are unseen in background.</li> <li>• NQTs teaching the PST something new gave NQTs confidence as they felt like co-professionals</li> <li>• The observations themselves were regarded as extremely helpful to NQTs where some NQTs felt it would be beneficial if more observations were compulsory. They were aware that they could do more but if it is not compulsory then they did not take up the opportunity though they felt it would have been beneficial to them if they had.</li> <li>• In smaller schools there was opportunity to have formal pre and post observation conversations. These were regarded as extremely helpful.</li> <li>• Some schools structured the Observations very well. All classes were</li> </ul> | <p><b>Observations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NQTs didn't get as much from observing PST online as they didn't get to see the PST in action in a real classroom environment. The benefit of the PST advice/support on classroom management etc. was lost in online observations.</li> <li>• Very difficult to find time for post observation conversation and were a lot quicker than you were hoping they might be. If feedback was straight after class it would be more beneficial if this happened and if it was a more formal meeting. For some NQTs it was a couple of minutes on the corridor. NQTs were disappointed with this.</li> </ul> <p><b>Release Time</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many NQTs were not aware there was release time.</li> <li>• For the majority of NQTs release time was not used. 11/16 NQTs said observations happened during their free time.</li> <li>• Release-time appeared to be used</li> </ul> | <p><b>Observations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was interesting to see students behave differently for different teachers during observations</li> <li>• In general, NQTs observed twice and were observed twice, in many cases by the same PST member.</li> <li>• Some NQTs got feedback sheets, others did not.</li> <li>• Some NQTs were given choice of subjects to observe others were not.</li> </ul> <p><b>Release Time</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There may have been a misunderstanding around the terminology "release time" - cover would be a better word.</li> </ul> <p><b>Principal observing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online observation by principal was interesting because the principal could see how online learning worked.</li> </ul> |

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| <p>covered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some did not find it a burden to schedule observations. Other teachers were very helpful in allowing NQTs into their classes. They looked at PST timetables on VShare and then made the arrangements.</li> </ul> | <p>on an inconsistent basis across the spectrum of schools involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NQTs wanted to know more about release time so it can be used more effectively and tailored to their needs.</li> </ul> |  |
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## Advice from NQTs

Participants were asked to write on a whiteboard the advice they would give to a PST or an NQT starting the *Droichead* process. The advice is collated in the tables below.

| Advice for PST   |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PST: greater clarification on release time.</li> <li>- Be aware that not everyone engaging in the process is an NQT.</li> <li>- Release time.</li> <li>- Make sure to discuss with the NQT the outline plan and give greater personalisation/ accommodate an individual NQT's progress in the process.</li> <li>- PST: more informal conversations/catching up with the NQT on a weekly basis.</li> <li>- Clarify the whole process at the start of the <i>Droichead</i> process for the NQT and take time to check in.</li> <li>- PST: keep checking in with us as we go. We are fine but it's nice to know that you are there for support.</li> <li>- Don't just say you're approachable.</li> <li>- Ask the NQTs what they need or want from the process and let that be the ultimate goal.</li> <li>- Help the NQT settle into the school through informal conversations as well as formal meetings.</li> <li>- Check in on a regular basis - informal check-ins are much better than formal settings.</li> </ul> |

- Make the first, second, third move!
- Try to create a supportive environment where NQTs are comfortable to approach - this could be through informal chats but also making sure to initiate meetings and conversations.
- Engage, support - we are new to this!
- Be supportive - it is quite daunting for the NQT so be understanding of that. Be prepared with all the information that we need. Make contact as much as possible.
- Accommodate NQTs to the best of your ability ensuring both informal and formal professional conversations take place regularly
- Have regular check-ins with NQTs
- Induction activities are important
- An initial meeting at the start of the process would be beneficial
- Have a means of communicating digitally - Teams , Google Drive etc.
- Formal and informal conversations
- Work on the outline plan together
- The principal should not be a PST member

## Advice for NQTs

- Make an outline plan with dates.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Take advice, listen to other teachers but find your own style that works for you.
- Don't feel like a student teacher being observed. The PST are there to help and support.
- It is not like placement, so don't stress over it.
- Use the time wisely to get the most advice/help that you need. View it with a positive attitude rather than additional work.
- Utilise the expertise of your PST and other staff members, particularly within your subject.
- Observe as many experienced teachers as you can.
- Keep track of your CPD as you go.
- Attend and engage with Cluster Meetings.
- PST have been there before, ask them for advice.
- Chat to PST as much as possible re queries or issues.
- Use the time to accept mentorship. Use time to build a great collaborative relationship

with the PST.

- Sit down with the PST and set out a plan for your start date and completion date.
- Break out rooms are the most beneficial aspect. Networking is better than just being given information.
- Reflect daily and don't be afraid to ask teachers of other subjects if you can observe them.
- Engage with the process early and remember that everyone was in the same boat as you at some stage.
- Hang in there, stay cool, don't quit!
- Ask, you belong and well done for getting this far.
- Make a note of all the pieces of advice you receive.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions whether that is of other NQTs or other colleagues. Make sure to have both formal and informal conversations with your PST member. They are there to support you.
- Don't stress over observations - they are a much more positive experience than any inspection done during your training.
- Observe as many colleagues as you can. Don't be afraid to ask.
- Don't panic about all of the new concepts you explore as there is always someone there to help and support.
- Make a timeline at the beginning.
- Get as much out of the *Droichead* process as you possible can by engaging with your PST and other staff members. Observe as many different classes of different teachers as possible.
- Don't worry about asking your PST for anything - advice, help, the process itself - that's what they are there for.
- Take as much time as you need - don't feel like you need to rush the process.
- Observe as many teachers as you can from different subjects, from other subjects where you and that teacher have the same students, so you can see different classroom routines/set-ups. Always ask for advice if you need it - you are not expected to know everything.
- Enjoy it and get as much information as possible.
- Don't be afraid of the process and engage with it as best you can. It is a positive experience to get involved in. Ask as many questions and have as many professional

conversations as you can. Know exactly what you need to do and have a checklist. Analyse and reflect about what you want to get from *Droichead*, what aspects do you need to work on, how you can do that etc. It's not a scary process at all.

- Reach out and ask for help
- Make a checklist
- Keep your Taisce close to hand as you never know when an inspiration will hit
- Do not be afraid to ask questions
- Don't be afraid to ask for help. It can feel as if you are sinking if you don't.
- Don't be afraid to ask your PST for support with classroom issues.
- Don't panic, make a checklist and keep everything in a folder
- Make a checklist, plan dates, keep organised
- Try to begin your *Droichead* process as soon as you can so you don't have yourself under pressure.
- Be prepared for an overwhelming workload.
- Utilise every opportunity possible to learn, grow and develop. Grasp and embrace all advice and guidance and share with your colleagues and PST. You will receive and benefit greatly if you are enthusiastic, interested and willing to give and share of yourself.
- You control the process, stay on top of it.
- Pick the focus for what you'd like to improve on early in the year and base your observations on that.
- Embrace the process. Don't treat it as an added stress to your teaching career.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions and use the experience of PST
- Don't be afraid of the observations
- Go in with an open mind
- Enjoy the process
- Be proactive
- Talk to your colleagues / make an effort
- Pick a PLA that will benefit you
- Ask to do more than two observations if you want to
- Don't panic
- Get to know the PST and don't be afraid to talk to them and ask questions.
- Relax, it isn't that bad, breathe and enjoy it. Ask all the questions you want, while you can!

- Ask questions - lots of them
- Ask for help and guidance, ask for feedback.
- Do as many observations as possible especially ones that are both your subject and other subjects. Don't worry about it. Very informal.
- Get to know your PST members ASAP.
- Don't overthink too much, always ask for help.
- Collaborate as much as possible.
- Start noting down your key learning moments early on in the year to add to your Taisce.
- Ask your PST if you can complete the process in the first or second term, third term is very stressful.
- You don't need to know everything, it's all a learning process.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions, half the battle is actually asking the question. A question shared is a problem halved.
- Talk to teachers, many may have done *Droichead* and can support.
- Get as much information as possible from the beginning
- Talk to your colleagues and the PST whenever you need and don't feel you need to wait for a meeting.
- Collaborate and share resources but don't get overwhelmed-Trial and error!
- Aim to finish before Easter as final term can be hectic.

## Conclusion

The NQTs who attended the 2020.2021 NQT Voice Event, and who completed the pre-event questionnaire, were representative of the many diverse schools across the country. In general, participants were very positive about their *Droichead* experience. They recognised that it afforded them the opportunity to work with experienced teachers during their induction process, and that they, the NQT, were in control of the process. NQTs were very clear that it was not the same as being examined during the PME. Rather, they viewed it as an opportunity to have professional conversations with colleagues, where everyone is equal. The words used during the NQT voice event that described NQTs experience of the *Droichead* process most often were: “supportive, collaborative, reflective, positive, reassuring, feedback, helpful and daunting”.

NQTs were especially positive about lesson observations. From the results of the pre-event questionnaire, 75% of NQTs were observed twice by their PST. NQTs were also more likely to complete two observations of their PST or other experienced colleagues. It was frequently stated in the pre-event questionnaire that observations helped to increase the confidence of NQTs. During the NQT voice event, they described observations as “extremely beneficial.” 98% of NQTs said in the questionnaire that they had post observation conversations, however it was discussed at the NQT voice event that not all NQTs had the same time given to the post-observation conversation when they were in school. NQTs who had the opportunity to have a formal post-observation conversation immediately after the lesson cited this as ideal. During online lesson observations post observation conversations happened immediately after the lesson and this was highlighted as an advantage by NQTs of online lesson observation.

NQTs were very positive about their PST members and valued the support and encouragement that they had received. In the pre-event questionnaire NQTs noted that, if they had an issue or concern, they were more likely to seek support from their PST than any other colleague. NQTs discussed how they had met with their PST both formally and informally, and they had benefited greatly from collaborating with them. Some NQTs highlighted that they did not start their *Droichead* process at

the beginning of the school year because it took them some time to identify who the PST members were. This is something that could be highlighted to the senior management teams in schools.

There was mixed feedback on having the Principal/Deputy Principal as a PST member as some NQTs felt under pressure being observed. However, other NQTs noted that “if the Principal was going to observe you anyway then it was a way of getting it out of the way.”

70% of NQTs responded in the pre-event questionnaire that they had a *Droichead* outline plan, and of these NQTs, 77% (or 54% of all respondents) had designed the outline plan in collaboration with their PST. However, at the NQT voice event, it was apparent that some NQTs did not have an outline plan at the beginning of the year. At one event, only 6 out of 16 NQTs had an outline plan. The inconsistency in the use of *Droichead* outline plans warrants careful consideration. The NQTs that had an outline plan found it helpful, and many NQTs liked storing their records online using Microsoft Teams/Google Docs. This was frequently cited as an advantage of lockdown.

The support received from NIPT was extremely positive, and the RDOs and staff at head office received high praise.

Taisce gave NQTs an opportunity to reflect on their journey and they enjoyed looking back at how they had developed professionally. It was noted at the NQT voice event that Taisce is an excellent activity to collate information in preparation for interviews. 90% of NQTs stated in the pre-event questionnaire that they had shared reflections from their Taisce with their PST. The majority of NQTs used diaries or journals to record their reflections, with others using online formats (such as Google Docs) to maintain their Taisce. NQTs who attended the NIPT workshops found them helpful. High praise was expressed for PDST courses and the NIPT workshops as PLAs. It should be noted that not all NQTs were aware of the NIPT workshops.

89% of NQTs evaluated the Cluster Meetings as ‘Helpful’ or ‘Very Helpful’ in the pre-event questionnaire. They found the clusters informative, a good way to reflect and overall, very

beneficial. NQT's liked having the opportunity to talk to other NQTs at the cluster meetings. The online format of Cluster Meetings 2 and 3 was preferred to Cluster Meeting 1. Cluster Meeting 1 crashing was an issue, and some NQTs felt the content repeated what the PST had already told them.

NQTs responded very positively to induction activities in the pre-event questionnaire, with 92% stating that the induction activities supported their needs as an NQT. NQTs listed examples of induction activities that they had participated in, in both the questionnaire and during the NQT voice event. NQTs noted (in both the questionnaire and the NQT voice event), that induction activities occurred throughout the year. However, for many, induction was an informal professional conversation at the beginning of the year. Significantly, at the NQT voice event, it was obvious that further clarity was required by many NQTs as to what constitutes an induction activity. Furthermore, whole school support did not feature in NQTs feedback on their *Droichead* process.

The use of release time (or lack of use) was an issue in both the pre-event questionnaire and the NQT voice event. In the questionnaire, 56% of NQTs noted that they had used their own time to complete lesson observations, while just 16% had used release time. At the NQT voice event, many NQTs were not aware that release time was available. Release time appeared to be used on an inconsistent basis across the spectrum of schools involved.

NQTs offered lots of advice to PSTs. They emphasised the importance of continued contact, both formal and informal, throughout the year. The importance of a meeting at the beginning of the year, and the need for continued support from the PST were also stressed.

NQTs also offered advice to new NQTs starting their *Droichead* process. NQTs suggested that future NQTs should ask lots of questions, and to get to know and accept support from the PST. They also advised NQTs to engage in lots of observations because they are much more beneficial than any feedback given in PME. Finally, NQTs advised other NQTs to have an outline plan with a start and end date, and to reflect on their journey throughout the year.

It is evident from both the NQT voice event and its pre-event questionnaire, that the *Droichead* process has been extremely beneficial for NQTs throughout the country. NQTs experience an induction process that has support at its heart, from both the PST and NIPT. Some areas that could be approached with more consistency by all schools include induction activities, the *Droichead* outline plan, the use of release time, and the duration and frequency of formal post observation conversations.

However, what is clear, consistent, and highly valued, is an induction programme that allows NQTs to engage with and seek support from other NQTs; to reflect on their professional journey; and to take ownership of their own induction. The work of the PST is valued and appreciated by NQTs, and lesson observations were the main highlight for many NQTs.