



Tacaíocht, Misneach & Spreagadh
Supporting School Leadership

A Guide to IPPN



Our Vision

Empowered Leaders;
Inspired Learners

Our Mission

Our mission is to *support
and advocate for
exemplary school
leadership - Tacaíocht,
Misneach & Spreagadh*

Our Values

Our values define us as
an organisation:

Respect

Trust

Professionalism

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1 VISION, MISSION, VALUES & GOALS

1.1 ORGANISATIONAL GOALS

The following goals underpin all of the work of IPPN, now and in the future, to achieve our stated mission 'to support and advocate for exemplary school leadership' and, ultimately, to achieve our vision of 'Empowered Leaders; Inspired Learners':

1. To provide a continuum of personal and professional development
2. To offer professional guidance and networking opportunities
3. To be a trusted voice for children's welfare and learning
4. To positively influence education policy
5. To provide leadership to all school leaders
6. To secure independent and sustainable funding to enable ongoing delivery of the supports & services required by school leaders.

1.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The following four strategic objectives will help us achieve our vision and mission:

1. To strengthen our network by harnessing the capacity and capability of school leaders
2. To maximise IPPN's impact and ensure that school leaders' experience is central to education policy by continuing to build collaborative relationships with key stakeholders
3. To ensure IPPN's supports and services are enhanced to reflect the needs of today's school leaders
4. To continue the ongoing work in achieving our primary organisational goals.

2 ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

School Leadership is both professionally challenging and personally demanding. The Irish Primary Principals' Network (IPPN) was established in the year 2000 to address school leaders' professional and personal needs. IPPN's focus from the beginning has been to support school leaders at local and county level and to represent their views nationally.

2.1 PROFESSIONAL BODY

IPPN is the officially-recognised professional body for Irish primary school leaders. It is an independent, not-for-profit voluntary association with a local, regional and national presence. Recognised by the Minister for Education as an official Education Partner, IPPN works with the DES, the National Parents' Council, management bodies, unions, education agencies, academic institutions and children's charities towards the advancement of primary education. The Republic of Ireland has more than 558,000 children attending 3,250 primary schools. IPPN articulates the collective knowledge and professional experience of over 6,500 principals and deputy principals.

2.2 STRUCTURE

IPPN supports school leaders at local and county level and represents their interests nationally. Principals and deputy principals participate in local support groups. IPPN facilitates twenty-six County Networks and each Network meets at least three times each year. Each County Network elects two members to form IPPN's National Council. The National Council is responsible for governance and policy. It elects a President and officers who form the Board of Directors.

IPPN works closely with the National Association of Head Teachers - NAHT (NI), and is a member of the International Confederation of Principals (ICP). These links play an important role in our research and pursuit of best international practice.

2.3 ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

The following is the overall IPPN organisational structure starting, as is fitting, with our members. School leaders meet informally in support groups and more formally in county networks. Each county network elects two representatives to form the National Council, which elects the Board of Directors. The CEO directs the work of the IPPN Support Office to deliver on IPPN's Strategic Plan.

Membership

Principals and Deputy Principals of 3,275 Primary Schools

Support Groups

Informal

County Networks

Organised by County Committees

National Council

52 Members – 2 Representatives from the 26 County Networks

Board of Directors

Elected by National Council

President

Elected by National Council

CEO

Employed by Board of Directors

Past President

Deputy CEO

Deputy President

National Support Office

Supports & Services, Advocacy & Representation, Infrastructure

- Employed by Board of Directors

2.4 SUPPORT GROUPS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Support Groups form the main 'cell structure' of IPPN. Support groups have been in existence and sustained with the aid of Local Education Centres. Every support group has its own dynamic. The most commonly-shared characteristics of successful support groups are:

- ❖ One member co-ordinates the date and venue of the next meeting
- ❖ One main topic is selected by consensus as the focus of the next meeting - each meeting is used to discuss a variety of current issues
- ❖ Regular monthly meetings e.g. second Thursday of the month
- ❖ Meetings immediately after school or at night – some groups meet in the afternoons of administration days
- ❖ Small groups – normally 8 to 12 principals
- ❖ A high degree of confidentiality and discretion
- ❖ A regular social dimension
- ❖ Frequent sharing of resources, ideas and strategies
- ❖ No formal agenda
- ❖ No minutes or reports
- ❖ No external speakers.

Principals' Support Groups do not typically include deputy principals as they are designed to meet the needs of those in the role of principal. IPPN is working with a focus group of deputy principals to determine the demand for support groups for deputy principals, and to support the establishment of same. We believe that the co-leadership role of deputy principal would benefit equally from the type of support offered in these informal, collegial settings.

2.5 COUNTY NETWORKS

When a member joins IPPN, his or her school determines the County Network to which she/he belongs. Each County Network will typically organise one Continuous Professional Development (CPD) event per term, i.e. 3 per annum. These CPD events are funded through IPPN nationally and are open to all Principals and Deputy Principals of member schools.

2.6 NATIONAL COUNCIL

Each County Network elects two National Council representatives. The role of the National Council is to:

- ❖ Ensure effective communication between the Board of Directors, National Council and their own County Network.
- ❖ To assist the Board and National Council in developing IPPN policies
- ❖ To elect members to the Board of Directors
- ❖ To elect the President & Deputy President of IPPN
- ❖ To support the Board of Directors in identifying professional exemplars from within the membership.

2.7 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Council elects directors to the Board of Directors to govern the work of the organisation and the IPPN Support Office. The IPPN President acts as chairperson of the Board of Directors and works closely with the CEO, who in turn directs the Support Office staff. The past president, deputy CEO and deputy president are involved in leadership and management, working closely with the president and CEO.

2.8 BOARD OF DIRECTORS & ADVISORY GROUPS

The Board of Directors is responsible for strategic direction and overall governance of IPPN. It has a number of advisory groups which look at specific aspects of governance and advise the Board in relation to same.

| | Board of Directors | Governance & Nominations Advisory Group | Internal Audit Advisory Group | HR & Finance Advisory Group | Position Papers Advisory Group | Board Policy Advisory Group |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Pairic Clerkin (CEO) | | * | * | * | * | * |
| David Ruddy (President) | Chairperson | Chairperson | | * | | |
| Damian White (Deputy President) | * | * | | * | * | Chairperson |
| Anna Mai Rooney | * | | | | | |
| Brian O'Doherty (Treasurer) | * | | Chairperson | Chairperson | | |
| Catríona O'Reilly | * | | | | Chairperson | * |
| Denise Ward | * | | | | | |
| Gerard Ruane | * | | | | * | |
| Gerry Moran | * | | | | * | * |
| Íde Ní Dhubháin | * | | * | | | |
| Kieran McCarthy | * | | | * | | |
| Louise Tobin | * | | | | | |
| Mairead O'Flynn | * | | | | | * |
| Maria Doyle | * | * | | | | |
| Padraig McCabe | * | | | | | |
| Pat Connaghan | * | | | | | |
| Virginia O'Mahony | | * | | | | |
| Tomás Ó Slatara | | * | | | | * |
| Larry Fleming | | * | | | * | |
| Gerry Murphy | | * | | | | |
| Brendan McCabe | | * | | | | |
| Pat Goff | | * | | | | |
| Caroline O'Dea | | | * | * | | |
| Geraldine D'Arcy | | | | | * | |
| Áine Stack (Accountant) | | | | * | | |

2.9 IPPN PRESIDENT – DAVID RUDDY



David Ruddy was elected Deputy President/President Elect by the IPPN National Council in June 2015. David was principal of Talbot Senior National School in Clondalkin, Dublin, a co-ed school, until his retirement in 2017. He has been the author of the *Legal Diary* since Leadership+ was first launched in 2000.

David qualified as a barrister and has lectured extensively over the last 20 years. He is legal advisor to IPPN and has facilitated a number of one-day seminars on the subject of *Your School & the Law* as well as short seminars on avoiding litigation, family law, education law and SEN at numerous IPPN conferences. He has also presented numerous courses for Education Centres. He lectures in law in Marino Institute of Education and Trinity College Dublin. David is a legal editor of the *Primary Education Management Manual* published by Thompson Round Hall and is a member of FLAC. David is married to Yvonne, a primary teacher and former nurse. They have three children - Iris, Brendan and Maeve.

As IPPN Deputy President/President, David would like to enhance the advocacy role of IPPN, harnessing members' influence and position to progress the issue of increased release days for teaching principals and to lift the moratorium on In-school management, initiatives which would make the job of the school principal more sustainable.

2.10 IPPN CEO – PÁIRIC CLERKIN



Páirc was educated in St. Vincent's CBS Primary and Secondary Schools, Glasnevin, and obtained his teaching degree from St. Patrick's College. His first teaching post was in St. Francis Xavier SNS, Dublin 15. In 2001, Páirc was appointed as the founding Principal of St. Patrick's National School, Diswellstown in Dublin 15. He served initially as a teaching principal, and in 2003 became an administrative principal, following rapid expansion of the school. His sixteen years of experience as principal, close collaboration with his principal colleagues in Dublin 15 and his engagement with IPPN over a number of years heightened his appreciation and understanding of the complex challenges faced by school leaders in their diverse educational settings.

Páirc was an active member of IPPN Dublin for several years and served as chairperson from 2007 to 2010. In 2009, he was elected to the IPPN Board of Directors, and was appointed Treasurer in 2015. He presented a number of workshops at IPPN annual conferences and delivered CPD modules at IPPN County Network meetings, also representing IPPN on the '*Education Matters*' editorial team. During his tenure on the Board, Páirc initiated a pilot project to ascertain the feasibility of remote full-time administrative support for a cluster of teaching principals of small schools, which is currently being expanded. He has also contributed to IPPN publications and submissions to the DES and Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Social Protection on a number of topics.

Páirc was appointed as CEO of IPPN in 2017, succeeding the first CEO Seán Cottrell, who had served from the inception of the organisation in 2000.

2.11 IPPN DEPUTY PRESIDENT – DAMIAN WHITE



Damian has been principal of Scoil Shinchill, Killeigh, Co.Offaly since 1994. He is a native of the neighbouring parish of Kilcormac-Killoughey. He graduated from Mary Immaculate College, Limerick in 1987 and taught in Scoil Cholmcille, Kells, Co Meath, Scoil Treasa, Donore Avenue and St. Brigid's Castleknock before returning to Offaly to take up his present position.

He is a founder member of IPPN and a current Board member. He has held numerous positions in IPPN, including National Treasurer and for many years, editor of Leadership+. His regular article for the newsletter provides a colourful and insightful perspective on life as a school principal. His articles have been published in principals' magazines in a number of countries, as well as in the programme for the International Confederation of Principals (ICP) in Toronto.

His play 'A Triumph of Allsorts', based on the events surrounding The 1916 Easter Rising, was produced in several schools across the country in 2016. He had co-responsibility for the development of the Trade Exhibition at the annual IPPN conference for many years. He is currently an advisor with the Leadership Support Helpline and a trained mentor with CSL.

2.12 IPPN DEPUTY CEO – PAT GOFF



Pat is a Wexford man who started his teaching career in CBS Enniscorthy, before moving to Kennedy Park NS in Wexford town. He was appointed Deputy Principal in Scoil Mhuire, Coolcotts, Wexford in 1983. Scoil Mhuire, then a new school, opened with eight teachers. He completed a Masters in Educational Management in 1996. Pat became Principal in Scoil Mhuire in 1997 and the school continued to grow and expand to its current size, 43 teachers and 15 SNAs when Pat resigned to take up the position of IPPN Deputy CEO in September 2015.

Pat was the President of IPPN from 2009 to 2011. He has served as co-chair of the National Consultative Forum for Special Education. As principal of a Band 1 DEIS school, he has also represented IPPN on the DEIS Advisory Group. He was also part of the NCSE Working Group on a proposed new Model of Support for Additional Care Needs in schools. Pat also served on the NEWB as part of their School Implementation Group.

3 OVERVIEW – SUPPORTS & SERVICES

IPPN has designed a suite of supports and services for school leaders as follows:

3.1 E-SCÉAL

Email updates sent every Thursday during term time to inform you of current issues within education and providing professional guidance, from FAQs on circular releases, to announcements about IPPN events and services.

3.2 MAILING LISTS

IPPN's mailing lists are one of the most informative and immediate supports available to you in your role as school leader, to answer queries encountered on a daily basis. There is no question too great or small that will not be answered by colleagues who may have dealt with a similar situation in the past. They are closed mailing lists. This means that the content of the emails are intended for Principals and Deputy Principals who are members of IPPN.

networking@ippn.ie - Our networking mailing lists facilitates a peer-support community via email. Everyone in this community receives a copy of all emails sent via this special email address. It provides a mutually-supportive forum for IPPN members to ask questions, seek advice and share best practice.
advice@ippn.ie - Sensitive, confidential and non-generic comments/queries which are answered only by the mailing list moderators, who are members of our Leadership Advice Panel.

newprincipals@ippn.ie – This mailing list is designed for new principals appointed in the current school year - to give them an opportunity to share experiences and ideas with colleagues in a similar situation. All new principals known to Support Office will be subscribed to it.

county@ippn.ie – County mailing lists, for example **limerick@ippn.ie**, are proving popular with members in each county and are useful for promoting the likes of local activities, support groups and CPD events.

3.3 LEADERSHIP SUPPORT SERVICE

Leadership Support is a one-to-one confidential advisory service, providing collegial support and guidance of a non-directive or legal nature from a team of skilled, serving and retired principals. We also offer a Professional Guidance service – to get answers to commonly-asked queries of a factual nature.

Call 021 482 40 70 / Lo-Call 1890 21 22 23 to avail of these services

3.4 CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Each year, IPPN hosts national and regional professional development events for school leaders. These offer an opportunity to hear fresh thinking from national and international figures in education, participate in stimulating workshops and network with colleagues.

Regularly check the Events Calendar on the IPPN Dashboard for details of meetings, regional conferences, courses or other upcoming CPD events. You will also be notified by email or text of national events such as conferences and one-day seminars.

Examples of CPD events organised by IPPN are:

- ❖ Annual Principals' and Deputy Principals' Conferences
- ❖ Professional Briefing Day
- ❖ County Network meetings – at least one per term
- ❖ 'Your School' Seminar Series
- ❖ School Leaders' Summer School
- ❖ Ciall Ceannaithe online course
- ❖ Headstart for new principals.

See Appendix II - IPPN Continuum of Support for School Leaders for more information.

3.5 SUPPORTS FOR NEWLY-APPOINTED PRINCIPALS

Once IPPN is aware of a retirement or other vacancy for the role of principal, we ensure that information is provided to the incoming principal about the various supports available to them. See Appendix I for more information. We also engage with retiring principals to let them know about associate membership to stay in touch with education and also about opportunities to get involved in projects.

3.6 GROUP MENTORING

As part of the Induction Programme for Newly Appointed Principals, IPPN and NAPD train mentors nationally to facilitate the delivery of a Group Mentoring Programme for principals in their second year. All newly appointed principals who have engaged with one to one mentoring in their first year, are invited to participate in the Group Mentoring programme, through the groups formed within their local areas. IPPN is anxious for experienced principals, who have been previously trained as one to one mentors, to engage in the programme and train as Group Mentors.

3.7 SUPPORT GROUPS

Local Support Groups have proven to be the most effective form of support available to school leaders. Local Support Group meetings are the only meetings that will actually relieve your workload. You will have nothing to prepare before the meeting, you are not 'performing' at the meeting and you will not leave with a 'To Do' list. You will, however, leave the meeting feeling genuinely supported.

3.8 RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Publications that have been written or commissioned by IPPN as well as a variety of discussion/position papers currently being used to progress issues on behalf of our members.

Leadership+

The journal for Principals and Deputy Principals, an invaluable resource which is issued to members twice per school term. Leadership+ offers a wide range of articles of relevance to school leaders, including practical hints and tips, professional guidance, research summaries, information on new procedures and forthcoming events, to name just a few.

Resource Bundles

IPPN Resources Bundles are a one-stop-shop where you will find the answers, supporting documentation and reading materials relating to the most common queries school leaders encounter in the day-to-day management of their schools. These comprehensive resources are produced in an easy-to-use, interactive e-publication format.

Research publications

IPPN has undertaken a number of significant research projects over the years, the results of which have been published in the following reports, which are available to members on www.ippn.ie – Advocacy – Publications.

- ❖ Towards a Better Future – A review of the Irish School System (2017)
- ❖ Priorities for Principal Teachers – In Clear Focus (2014)
- ❖ Board of Management Resource Pack (2015 and 2011)
- ❖ Primary School Governance - Challenges & Opportunities (2011)
- ❖ Deich mBliana ag Fás (2010)
- ❖ Supporting Each Other - a guide to best practice for the effective partnership between Principals and Parent Associations (2010)
- ❖ Ciall Ceannaithe for Newly Appointed Principals (2010)
- ❖ Giorraíonn Beirt Bóthar – Distributing Leadership (2007)
- ❖ Investing in School Leadership (2006)
- ❖ Quality Leadership & Quality Learning (2006)
- ❖ New Horizons for Smaller Schools and Teaching Principals in Ireland (2005)
- ❖ The Value of Leadership? (2004)
- ❖ A Vision for In-School Management (2003)
- ❖ Defining the role of the Primary Principal in Ireland – A report by HayGroup Management Consultants (2002).

3.9 ONLINE SERVICES

Our member website www.ippn.ie provides a wealth of resources, sample policies, templates, publications, research, information updates and education news.

The **IPPN Dashboard** – available at dashboard.ippn.ie - on one webpage provides all you need to know at a glance, including a calendar of events, sector updates, latest IPPN resources and E-scéals and networking mailing list posts.

The following services are owned and operated by IPPN. They were designed by and for school leaders to reduce the administrative and cost burden on schools.



TextaParent.ie is a fast, reliable and cost-effective way for schools to contact parents and staff. This online group texting service enables schools to instantly communicate with a large group of people. Our new App allows us to provide a dual messaging service which uses SMS and Push notification.



EducationPosts.ie is Ireland's longest established and most widely used website dedicated to education recruitment. There are nearly 17,000 education related posts advertised annually on EducationPosts.ie – across pre-school, primary, post-primary, third & higher level and International & Other job posts.



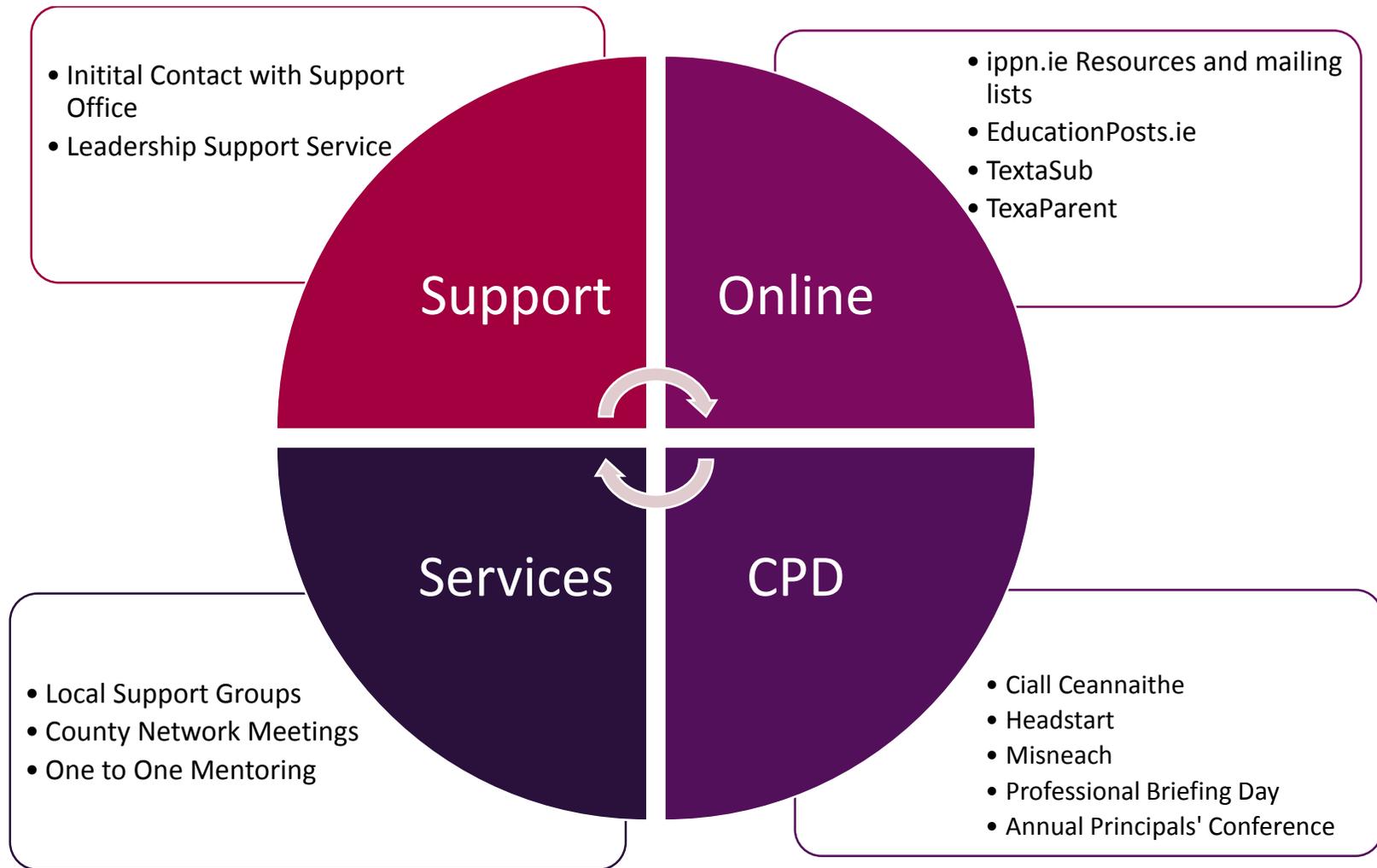
TextaSub is an online service that enables schools to send free text alerts to Primary qualified teachers that are available for subbing work in a selected county. All teachers are qualified primary school teachers, verified with the Teaching Council. There are over 37,000 text messages issued monthly via this service.



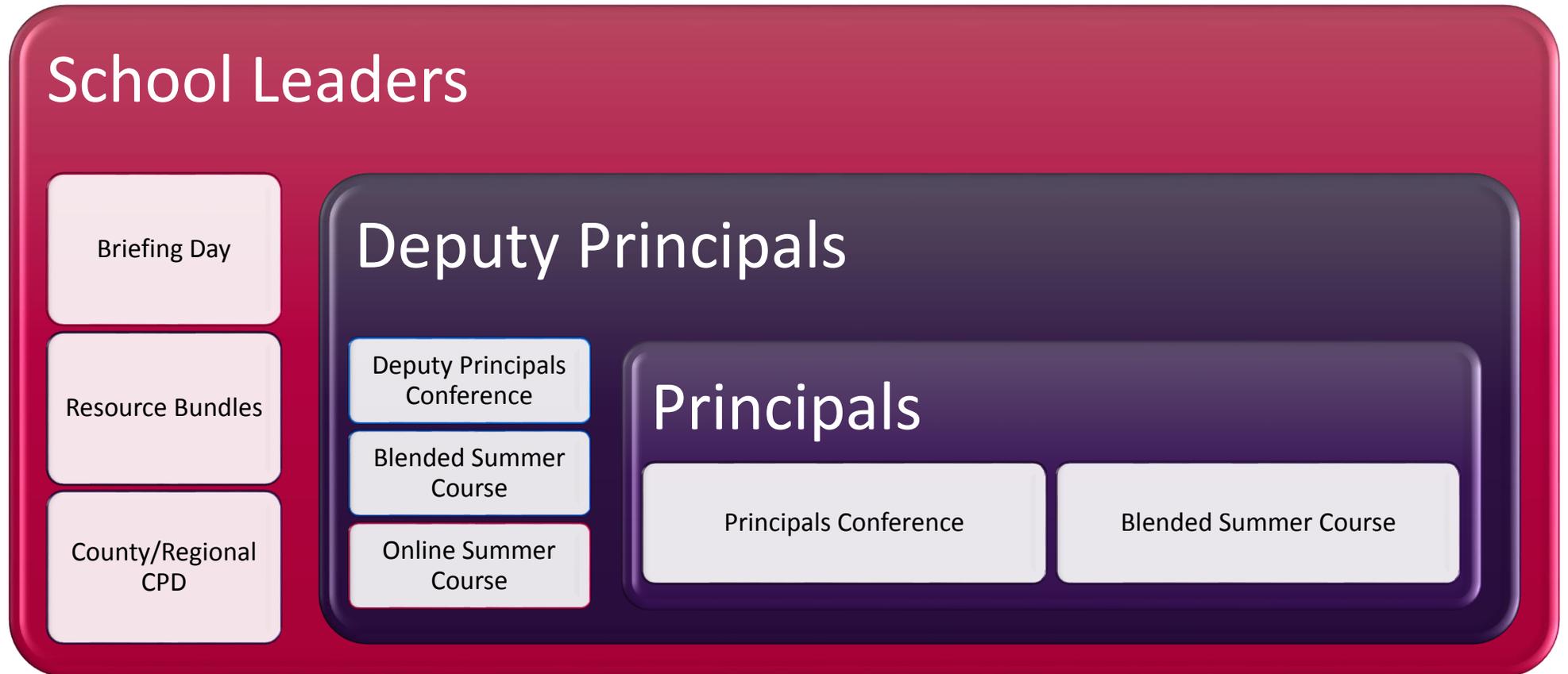
Airgead Bunscoile

Airgead Bunscoile is a Microsoft Excel-based school finance software package to manage income and expenditure in an easy-to-use format. It is free to members to download from www.ippn.ie – Forms & Templates.

Appendix 1: Services provided to Newly Appointed Principals



Appendix 2: IPPN Continuum of Support for School Leaders



School Leadership

Aspiring

Deputy Principals
Ciall Ceannaithe

Middle Leadership

Excellence in
School Leadership

Newly Appointed & Aspiring

Ciall Ceannaithe

Headstart

Mentoring -
Individual

Group Mentoring
(Principals in
Year 2)

Teacher
Leadership