



A Guide to IPPN

2014

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1 VISION, MISSION, VALUES & GOALS

“There are no examples of school-wide success without effective school leadership; all examples of school failure include weak or ineffective leadership.” (Fullan, 2006)

Vision

Every Principal empowered to be an exemplary leader of learning – every teacher inspired to lead every child’s learning

Mission

Supporting & Representing School Leaders
Tacaíocht, Misneach & Spreagadh

Values

Respect, Trust & Professionalism

Goals

Supports & Services

- To provide all school leaders with a continuum of high quality personal and professional development, support, advice and guidance in order to maximise the learning outcomes of every child
- To promote collegiality and professional dialogue and the sharing of best practice throughout the network of school leaders

Representation

- To provide leadership to school leaders
- To influence change in primary education
- To be the trusted voice for children and their learning

Infrastructure

- To be financially secure and independent, providing the human and financial resources to maintain our Supports & Services and Advocacy needs
- To diversify funding sources for long time organisational sustainability

2 ABOUT IPPN

School Leadership is both professionally challenging and personally demanding. The Irish Primary Principals' Network (IPPN) was established in the year 2000 to address principals' professional and personal needs.

IPPN's focus from the beginning has been to support principal teachers at local and county level and to represent their views nationally.

Professional Body

IPPN is the officially-recognised professional body for the leaders of Irish primary schools. 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 approximately 540,000 children attending 3,320 primary schools. IPPN articulates the collective knowledge and professional experience of 6,600 Principals and Deputy Principals.

Structure

IPPN supports Principals 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 Management.

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.

3 IPPN IN ACTION

IPPN consists of 3 different layers of organisation:

1. Support Groups
2. 26 County Networks
3. A National Council with Executive Officers.

3.1 SUPPORT GROUPS

Principals' 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.

By definition, a Principals' Support Group does not include Deputy Principals as the main motivation of the group is to support those who are in the role of Principal. As in the case of resource teachers, learning support teachers among others, if and when DPs wish to avail of Support Groups, the establishment of such groups can be negotiated with the local Education Centre.

3.2 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.

4 OVERVIEW – SUPPORTS & SERVICES

- **www.ippn.ie:** Website where members can avail of a wealth of resources, FAQs, publications, research, information updates and education news.
- **E-scéal:** E-mail updates sent regularly to inform members of current issues within education and providing professional guidance, from FAQs on circular releases to announcements, about IPPN events and services.
- **networking@ippn.ie and other Mailing Lists:** Members' mailing lists which facilitate professional debate, peer support and the sharing of good practice. In addition, advice@ippn.ie is a one-way mailing list to request a response from the Principal Advice panel.
- **Principal Advice Service:** A one-to-one confidential advisory service that offers Principals a listening ear from someone who understands their situation. The Principal Advice service provides collegial support and guidance of a non-directive and non-legal nature from a team of skilled serving and retired Principals.
- **Continuous Professional Development:** Each year, IPPN hosts a Principals' and a Deputy Principals' Conference as well as arranging other regional professional development events and online courses. These offer school leaders the opportunity to hear fresh thinking from national and international figures in education, participate in stimulating workshops and network with colleagues.
- **County Networks:** Through the system of 26 County Networks IPPN facilitates CPD in the form of guest speakers or interactive sessions for the benefit of members in each county. County Network meetings offer Principals an invaluable opportunity to network with each other sharing best practice and advice.



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.

TextaParent.ie is also far more cost-effective than photocopied notes, letters or phone calls.



To alleviate the burden of costs associated with newspaper advertising, IPPN developed EducationPosts.ie to enable schools to advertise vacancies free of charge. The website is the number one choice for schools advertising vacancies. Thousands of teachers use EducationPosts.ie in their search for work.



TextaSub is an online service that enables members to send free text alerts to primary-qualified teachers who are available for subbing work in the relevant county. Teachers are required to supply a valid Teaching Council number in order to register for TextaSub.

- **Research Publications:**

- Priorities for Principal Teachers – In Clear Focus (2014)
- Board of Management Resource Pack (2011)
- Primary School Governance - Challenges & Opportunities (2011)
- Deich mBlíana 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 (2008) - updated annually
- 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)

5 IPPN GOVERNANCE

Membership

Principals and Deputy Principals of 3,300 Primary Schools

National Council

52 Members – 2 Representatives from 26 County Networks

Board of Directors

Elected by National Council

Past President

**Assistant
Director**

**Deputy
President**

President

Elected by National Council

Executive Director

Employed by Board of Directors

National Support Office

Supports and Services, Representation and Advocacy, Infrastructure
Employed by Board of Directors

Membership

Principals and Deputy Principals of 3,300 Primary Schools

6 IPPN EXECUTIVE

6.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014

First Name	Last Name	Executive Role
Brendan	McCabe	President
Maria	Doyle	Deputy President
Larry	Fleming	PRO
Pat	Goff	Treasurer
Gerry	Murphy	Past President
Anna Mai	Rooney	
Tom	McGann	
Damian	White	
Pat	Gately	
Gerard	Ruane	
Páirc	Clerkin	
Seán	Cottrell	Executive Director (Ex Officio)
Virginia	O'Mahony	Assistant Director (Ex Officio)
David	Ruddy	Legal Advisor (Ex Officio)

6.2 IPPN PRESIDENT – BRENDAN MCCABE



Born in Skerries, Co. Dublin and educated in St. Patrick's N.S., Skerries, Coláiste na Rinne and Newbridge College before going on to train as an NT in Marino, Brendan was part of the very first group of lay students to graduate from Marino College. He subsequently graduated as a B.Ed. from the in-service course in St. Patrick's, Drumcondra.

Brendan taught for a year in St. Mary's N.S., Rathfarnham, before moving to County Meath as principal teacher of Heronstown N.S. at age 20. He spent twelve years there as a teaching principal before becoming Principal of St. Colmcille's School, Kells, in 1988. Besides his interest in school leadership, he has been involved in professional development and delivering courses to teachers in School Planning. He regularly speaks to parent groups on the topics of Bullying and Parent Associations. Brendan was elected to the Executive Committee of IPPN in 2007. He was elected as Deputy President in 2011 and commenced his presidency in September 2013 for a period of two years. In 2012, the Minister of Education appointed Brendan as his nominee to the Teaching Council.

6.3 IPPN DEPUTY PRESIDENT – MARIA DOYLE



Maria graduated from Mary Immaculate College of Education with a B. Ed. and started her career as a class teacher at Holy Family Junior Mercy Primary School where she taught until 1995. That same year, she was appointed as the first lay principal at Our Lady of Mercy Senior Primary School in Waterford City, a DEIS band 2 senior girls' school, where she continues to serve as principal.

Maria is a member of IPPN's Board of Management and is Chairperson of the Waterford Principals' County Network. She is a facilitator for the *Ciall Ceannaithe* online course for newly-appointed principals and has provided workshops on the topic of child protection at several IPPN principals' conferences. Maria represented IPPN on the consultative group revising the *DES Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post-Primary Schools* (2010/2011) and also during the updating of the *Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedure – DES* (2011). Her brief on the IPPN Board of Management is the Principal Advice support service as well as advocacy & representation projects. Maria is the primary schools' representative on the Waterford Children Services Committee.

6.4 SEÁN COTTRELL



A native of Innishannon, West Cork, Seán began teaching at St. Joseph's, Cobh, County Cork. He has served as teaching principal at two schools, Churchtown South and Little Island, and as administrative principal in Glounthaune until 2003. Seán was a founding member of both the Cork Primary Principals' Network (1995) and the Irish Primary Principals' Network (1999). He has been involved in facilitating professional development for teachers, principals and parents on the 'Stay Safe' Programme, Emotional Intelligence and Classroom Management.

Seán has worked in development education projects with VSO and UNHCR in Tajikistan, Bhutan and Djibouti. He was an Irish Election observer to South Africa's first all-race elections in 1994. Seán currently serves as Executive Director of IPPN and is accountable to its Board of Directors for the overall leadership and management of IPPN.

Appendix 1: Services provided to Newly Appointed Principals



Appendix 2: CPD Principal Diagram

