



Powerstown Educate Together National School

Roll No: 20384J

Powerstown Road, Tyrrelstown, Dublin 15

Telephone: 01 8272018

Email: info@powerstownet.com

www.powerstownet.com

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Probation Policy

This policy has been formulated by Powerstown ETNS to assist teachers, pupils and parents in making an informed decision in relation to promoting and maintaining a green school.

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1. Introduction:

Powerstown ETNS wishes to ensure that all new members of staff to the National School are properly supported at the beginning of their employment. Powerstown ETNS recognises that all new staff need to undergo a period of planned induction, training and appropriate support. This will ensure that there is a smooth transition from being a new member of staff to becoming an established member of the school staff.

A probationary period allows staff, over a set period of time, to work within a clear framework. It also gives the school an opportunity to assess the suitability and capability of the member of staff in relation to the job they have been appointed to do before the appointment is confirmed.

Due to the variety of roles within the school. This policy is divided into three sections:

- Section 1: Special Needs Assistants
- Section 2: Newly Qualified Teachers
- Section 3: Temporary Teachers
- Section 4: Permanent Teachers.

2. Section 1: Special Needs Assistants

2.1 Probation for SNAs:

In accordance with circular 12/05, newly employed Special Needs Assistants staff appointments are to be probationary. They will be employed on the condition that their probationary service is completed satisfactorily. Successful completion of probation will be the normal expectation for a Special Needs Assistant.

2.2 Duration of Probation:

Special Needs Assistants will be on probation for six months (unless this is longer than the duration of the Fixed Term contract) with effect from the date employment commences. At the end of the said period the Special Needs Assistant's appointment may be confirmed.

Probation may be extended for a further period not exceeding 5 months [i.e. the total probationary period should not exceed 11 months nor should it exceed the period of the Fixed-Term] months or the Employee's employment may be terminated as the Employer may determine. In the event that the Employee's performance is unsatisfactory during the probationary or extended probationary period, employment may be terminated by one week's notice.

3. Section 2: Newly Qualified Teachers

3.1 Probation for Newly Qualified Teachers

Powerstown ETNS is a “Droichead Pilot School”.

Droichead refers to the period of professional practice which a newly qualified teacher (NQT) in a Droichead pilot school is required to undertake following initial registration. Satisfactory engagement in Droichead is attached to such teachers’ registration as a condition. From the perspective of the NQT, what this means in practice is that, in order to fulfil the Droichead condition, he or she is required to:

- a) engage in a period of school-based induction (see Sections 5 & 6 of Droichead Guidelines or School’s Droichead Policy)
- b) be confirmed by (an) experienced fellow professional(s), following that process, as having satisfied certain criteria, and
- c) complete a minimum period of post-qualification professional practice, which may take place in one or more schools.

Like all registration conditions, NQTs must satisfy the Droichead condition within three years of initial registration. A teacher may only be probated and fully registered when all conditions of initial registration have been met.

3.2 Duration of Probation:

In Powerstown ETNS the Droichead process runs from initial induction in August until May. Each NQT is appointed a mentor to support them on their Droichead journey. Set criteria is discussed, with timeline and plan of activities etc laid out for the year.

It is important that NQTs refer to the school’s Droichead Policy and Droichead guidelines (<http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/Publications/Teacher-Education/Droichead-A-Guide-for-Schools-2015-2016.pdf>)

4. Section 3: Fixed Term Temporary Teachers

4.1 Probation for Temporary:

All temporary teachers are given a standardised contract of employment with the school based on department guidelines .

4.2 Duration of Probation:

A probationary period of **four** months will apply to the Employee’s employment. The Employer reserves the right to extend this probationary period at its sole discretion subject to a maximum period of eleven months. The Employee’s employment may be terminated either during this period (or any extension of it) or on the expiry thereof at the discretion of the Employer by giving to the Employee one week’s notice in writing. The contract may in

any event be terminated at any time by the Employer in accordance with the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act 1973 (as amended)

5. Section 4: Permanent Teachers.

All permanent teachers are required to sign a contract with the school which details:

- The Management Authority shall have absolute power to determine the said employment at any time without previous notice to the Teacher; but in every such case (not coming under Article III) she/he shall be bound to pay to the Teacher three months' salary recoverable as a debt.
- The Management Authority shall also have power to determine the said employment, without previous notice, for misconduct or other sufficient reason; in which case the Teacher shall not be entitled to any compensation.

The duties of the Teacher shall be such as are in accordance with the Rules for National Schools.

6. Section 5: Developing School Posts

6.1. Departmental Guidelines

All developing school posts (permanent) are subject to the enrolment number in Powerstown ETNS meeting the appointment schedule outlined by the Department of Education and Skills. If a situation arises whereby the school does not make said criteria, the developing school post will be suppressed on the day of the October mid-term break.

6.2 School Practice

Developing school post teachers will be invited to sign a contract on 1st of October (or closest school day after 30th September) if enrolment numbers meet appointment schedule.

All permanent teachers are required to sign a contract with the school which details:

- The Management Authority shall have absolute power to determine the said employment at any time without previous notice to the Teacher; but in every such case (not coming under Article III) she/he shall be bound to pay to the Teacher three months' salary recoverable as a debt.
- The Management Authority shall also have power to determine the said employment, without previous notice, for misconduct or other sufficient reason; in which case the Teacher shall not be entitled to any compensation.

The duties of the Teacher shall be such as are in accordance with the Rules for National Schools.

7. Procedures for Suspension and Dismissal of Teachers Section 24(3) of the Education Act (1998)

Section 24(3) of the Education Act 1998 provides for the suspension and dismissal of teachers by boards of management. Under the terms of Towards 2016 the parties undertook to review and revise existing procedures and to agree new procedures in time for implementation with effect from the commencement of the next school year. The boards of management and Principal have a responsibility for the quality and effectiveness of education and the management of staff in a school as set out in the Education Act 1998. While no procedures can be definitive about the range of circumstances which might give rise to the initiation of disciplinary procedures in general these are likely to be related to conduct, a threat to the health and safety of students and/or sustained failure to perform adequately the professional duties and responsibilities expected of a teacher.

The following agreed procedures provide for two separate and independent strands which should be utilised in appropriate circumstances:

- Procedures relating to professional competence issues
- Procedures relating to work, conduct and matters other than professional competence.

The procedures apply to all teachers other than those teachers serving in a probationary capacity.

In relation to teachers serving in a probationary capacity the existing probation arrangements will continue to apply. The procedures are designed to deal solely with issues of employment and supersede all disciplinary procedures in existence prior to this agreement. This is without prejudice to appeals to patrons, where currently provided, pending any review of such appeals.

Ratified:

Ratified by BOM in May 2013