



# Professional Reading and Reflection Journal

NQT Induction Course

2022-2023

## Newly Qualified Teacher Induction Programme

### Distinctive nature of the Catholic teacher

If you would prefer to access this information in SWAY, please click [here](#).

Welcome to your Induction programme and your post within a Catholic school. This pack contains resources to complement and enhance your Local Authority NQT programme. These materials are intended to be used in conjunction with the induction pathway that you are following within your school, with your mentor and in partnership with your Local Authority.

There are three different sections:

- [Pre Course Materials](#)
- [Intersession Materials](#)
- [Vocational Reflection Materials](#)

Each section will be used at different points across your NQT year.

Catholic schools are communities of faith and learning. While we may work as an individual within a classroom, we are part of a wider community, contributing to the Mission of the Church. Therefore, we should see our professional and vocational journey both in terms of our own personal progress AND in terms of the development and contribution to a faith community. These materials are intended to be used *with* others and you will be directed to collaborate with different members of your community in order to complete the directed tasks.

# Newly Qualified Teacher Induction Programme

## Distinctive Nature of the Catholic Teacher

### Section One: NQT Pre Course Materials

#### Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland

You may have already seen the 'Charter for Catholic schools in Scotland' at University or when applying for Approval for your post. The Charter summarises the key characteristics which all Catholic schools in Scotland strive to feature through the experiences and the service which they offer.

Even if you have read the Charter recently, take some time to read it again (see next page). Discuss the following with your mentor:

- which of the 10 points of the Charter do you feel are the most important?
- which points do you feel most able to put into action within your classroom practice?
- which points would you like to learn more about in order to develop your professional practice?





# Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland



The mission of the Catholic school is to develop as a community of faith and learning, providing the highest quality of education, and offering formation through the promotion of Gospel values, through celebration and worship, and through service to the common good.



**All Catholic schools in Scotland**, in honouring Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, will feature the following characteristics:



- a commitment to the integrated education and formation of the whole person, in close partnership with parents as the first educators of their children;
- an inclusive ethos which aims to honour the life, dignity and voice of each person, made in the image of God;
- a commitment to the search for wisdom in life and to the pursuit of excellence, through the development of each person's unique God-given talents;



- a commitment to the spiritual formation of the school community, through the shared experience of prayer and liturgy, and in partnership with local parishes;
- the provision of religious education programmes which will enable young people to develop their understanding of Gospel values and of how to apply them to life;



- a commitment to uphold the moral teaching, faith tradition and sacramental life of the Catholic Church;
- a commitment to communicate Catholic social teaching and thereby to promote social justice and opportunity for all;
- a commitment to ecumenical action and the unity of Christians;
- the promotion of respect for different beliefs and cultures and for inter-faith dialogue;



- a commitment to support the continuing professional and spiritual development of staff.

**All staff appointed to a Catholic school** are expected to support and promote the aims, mission, values and ethos of the school, as illustrated in this Charter.

*For more information, contact SCES. Tel: 0141 556 4727, email: [mail@sces.uk.com](mailto:mail@sces.uk.com) or visit [www.sces.uk.com](http://www.sces.uk.com)*





# Newly Qualified Teacher Induction Programme

## Distinctive nature of the Catholic teacher

### Section Two: NQT Intersession Materials

#### TERM ONE

Watch this video on Catholic School Leadership:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xIIPNS-BPg>

This short video gives us the language and context of the importance of the teacher and leader, the connection of witness in carrying out our vocation and the way in which the Catholic school is an integral part of the Mission of the Church.

**Reflective Journal: Note your thoughts on the following**

As a newly appointed Catholic school teacher (and therefore a leader of learning) how do you see your role as being part of the Mission of the Church?

Do you feel confident in speaking about and witnessing to your Catholic faith?

What support will you need across this first year of teaching to increase your confidence?

**Professional Reading:** Read the article on the following page.

**Professional Dialogue:** With your mentor or a peer, discuss what you have just read. Which of the 10 points resonates with you the most? Explain why.

Choose one point that you will try to put into practice in the next term. Discuss and plan how you will do this.

*Adapted from "Fourteen Tips for New Catholic School Teachers" - Published on August 31, 2015*

"Teaching is a noble profession! Nobility includes in its meaning the very notion of beautiful. Therefore, noble work is beautiful work. But what is beautiful can sometimes be sullied." While working at the University of Notre Dame's Alliance for Catholic Education Program Steve Virgadamo was often presented with opportunities to talk to new Catholic school teachers. Below are some of the thoughts he would share with them in an attempt to help each new teacher maintain the beauty and lustre of his/her own vocation as a Catholic school teacher.

- 1. Stay close to the Lord. Throughout your career, you will experience crises of confidence, exasperation, frustration, unreasonable parents, troubled students, bad classes, poor liturgies. You will be misquoted, misrepresented and for some periods of time, mistrusted. But you will also get the unparalleled gift to see the world with wonder again, through the eyes of young people. You will be made a confidante by a young person seeking advice, feel the joy of a weak student who does well on an assignment, cheer for your students in athletic contests, beam with a near parents' pride as your students graduate. To keep yourself rooted, to keep your ideas fresh, to be the kind of faithful person our young people need to see first-hand, stay close to the Lord, both in your daily prayer and in the reception of the sacraments. If you do, the Lord will bless you in your work and you will go to bed each night exhausted, but with a smile on your face.*
- 2. Be yourself. If you're young, you've probably never been called Mister Jones or Miss Smith, and that will take some getting used to. But you can be yourself within this role. I have never agreed with the maxim "Don't let them see you smile until Thanksgiving." The fact is, students respond better to authenticity. It's OK to laugh at something the students say which is amusing—in fact, it's quite disarming to them. It's OK to let the students see you having fun.*
- 3. Admit your mistakes and learn from them. Zero in on your strengths, not your weaknesses. (Remember -- nobody's perfect!) Principals also suffer from human frailty and need to learn from experiences. School leaders need to be supported not weakened by gossip and other toxic behaviour which is destructive to the Catholic School community.*
- 4. Be professional. Model desired attitudes and behaviour. Make sure you dress in professional attire. Remember that you teach students first, and then you teach whatever academic discipline you learned. You are a role model for the children and partner with the parents in the formation of each child.*
- 5. Don't "go it alone." Get to know all the teachers in your school and make friends with the cafeteria staff, custodians, aides, and secretaries. We are all formators of children, just each with a different role to play in that formative process. Volunteer to share projects and ideas, and don't be afraid to ask others to share their ideas with you. Understand that the learning process involves everyone -- teachers, students, colleagues, and parents -- and get everyone involved. Seek the advice of your colleagues, share your frustrations with them, and ask questions. Remember we are promised that whenever two or more are gathered in His name that he will be with us to enlighten and guide us.*





6. *Jump in with both feet! Some classrooms don't have walls. So, don't be a person who clocks in at 7:30 and clocks out at 3 each day. Come to afterschool activities. Nothing connects you with your students faster than to be able to say "Nice hit," or "great singing," or "I was impressed with your artwork at the show." You can't be at everything; but make a point some days to just stop in at after school care to say hello. You'll see kids in a whole new light, and I think you'll enjoy it, too.*
7. *Pray for your students and their families. Your most important work is to bring a piece of heaven into the classroom with you.*
8. *Think before you speak; if you do, you won't speak very often, for there is a great deal to think about in education.*
9. *Thirty plus years from now, your students will not remember all that you taught them, but they will remember who you were and how you treated them You have a choice to become a minister of justice or an angel of peace. Be an angel of peace.*
10. *Remember that a good day is not necessarily smooth, painless and hassle free and that all the knowledge we give our students is in vain if they receive it without knowing they are good and loved by God. Each day is an opportunity to channel the divine love. Don't waste an opportunity to do so. Every minute counts!*

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/twelve-tips-new-catholic-school-teachers-steven-virgadamo>



# Notes

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## Term Two

Read this extract from “The Catholic School on the threshold of the third millennium” published by the Vatican’s Congregation for Catholic Education in December 1997.

### *Cultural identity of the Catholic school*

11. From the nature of the Catholic school also stems one of the most significant elements of its educational project: the synthesis between culture and faith. Indeed, knowledge set in the context of faith becomes wisdom and life vision. The endeavour to interweave reason and faith, which has become the heart of individual subjects, makes for unity, articulation and coordination, bringing forth within what is learnt in school a Christian vision of the world, of life, of culture and of history. In the Catholic school's educational project there is no separation between time for learning and time for formation, between acquiring notions and growing in wisdom. The various school subjects do not present only knowledge to be attained, but also values to be acquired and truths to be discovered.(15) All of which demands an atmosphere characterized by the search for truth, in which competent, convinced and coherent educators, teachers of learning and of life, may be a reflection, albeit imperfect but still vivid, of the one Teacher. In this perspective, in the Christian educational project all subjects collaborate, each with its own specific content, to the formation of mature personalities.

[https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc\\_con\\_ccatheduc\\_doc\\_27041998\\_school2000\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_27041998_school2000_en.html)

### **Vocational Reflection:**

For Catholic schools in Scotland, Religious Education permeates the whole school and RERC, like numeracy, literacy and Health and Wellbeing, is a “Responsibility of all”.

The extract above states that “In the Catholic school...there is no separation between time for learning and time for formation”. Is this true of your classroom?

The document states that the teacher should be a reflection of the “one Teacher”. Would your pupils say you are a reflection of Jesus?

Across your planning (if you are a primary teacher) or across your school (if secondary) do you see evidence that “all subjects collaborate...to the formation of mature personalities”? If not, what can be done to achieve this?

# Notes

A large rectangular area containing 20 horizontal lines for writing notes.



## Term Three

*“Educating is . . . an attitude, a way of being. In order to educate, it is necessary to step out of ourselves and be among young people, to accompany them in the stages of their growth and to set ourselves beside them. Give them hope and optimism for their journey in the world. Teach them to see the beauty and goodness of creation and of man who always retains the Creator’s hallmark. But above all with your life be witnesses of what you communicate.”*

*(Pope Francis, Address to the Students of the Jesuit Schools of Italy and Albania, June 7, 2013)*

This quote from Pope Francis is central to the national strategy for CLPL within Catholic schools (companions on the journey). In this strategy we outline how teachers in Catholic schools can develop the skills required to accompany young people and help them to become authentic adults, mature in life and in faith. Before embarking on your PRD process to identify your professional progress, needs and possible areas for development take some time to reflect on your vocational journey so far.

With your school chaplain, or your Diocesan RE Adviser use the following questions to critically reflect on your role as both an educator and a witness:

- In what way do you understand that your role as educator is a “way of being” and not simply a “job”?
- How do you show this to pupils, colleagues, parents?
- What challenges do you face in “stepping out of yourself”?
- What opportunities have you taken (could you take) to be among young people within a school context, but out with the classroom?
- What does it mean to “accompany” a child as a teacher?
- How do you (or your school) give hope and optimism to the young people in your care?
- Do you plan learning that allows them to see beauty and goodness in creation?
- Do you speak to them about the creator’s hall mark on their own lives?
- Does your life reflect and witness to what you are teaching?

## Notes

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### Section Three: Vocational Reflection Materials

With your NQT peers, colleagues in your school, or even on your own, use this short service to pray and reflect on your experience of the past year:

#### End of Year Time of Prayer

**INTRODUCTION** Good morning/afternoon, and welcome to our prayer service to mark the end of the school year and the end of our journey as 'newly qualified teachers'. The end of the school year means different things to each of us. Some of us will be moving on to new places, others to new responsibilities. Whether summer finds us working, resting, travelling or studying, for all it is the end of one season, and the emergence of something new.

Let us take the next few minutes to reflect on the blessings of this school year, to give thanks, and to ask God to continue with us as we journey through the changes that summer will bring.

Let us begin, as we always do: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

**OPENING PRAYER:** Lord God, as we ponder the blessings and challenges of this past year, grant us the peace of your Spirit and openness of heart to recognise the wonders you have done in us and the hope you have for our future. We make this prayer to you through Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **READING :** A reading from the prophet Isaiah (Is 43, 19-21)

**See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? In the desert I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers. Wild beasts honour me, jackals and ostriches, For I put water in the desert and rivers in the wasteland for my chosen people to drink, The people I formed for myself, That they might announce my praise.**

(Pause)

The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

**Reflection:** It is easy to think that we are coming to the end of something with the close of this schools year. Yet, when we live by faith, every ending is the beginning of something new.

When we live by faith, time becomes a gift, and seasons, our opportunity to grow and develop year after year: refining and re-creating us in our vocation.

See, God is doing something new!

This part of your journey may be over, but your work is necessary as part of God's tireless labours, to build up what is just, to strengthen those who doubt, to fire the imagination of the young with endless possibilities for learning, for growing, for becoming, for being in love.

See, I am doing something new!

**GOSPEL READING : A reading from the Gospel according to Mark (Mk 6, 30-34)**

The apostles gathered around Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognised them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

(Pause)

The Gospel of the Lord. **All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**GROUP REFLECTION:** This Gospel passage is the perfect example of teaching – Jesus is the perfect example of The Teacher. Those who have learned from him and have gone on to teach others surround him and with excitement tell them all that they have done. He listens and he not only hears all they say, but he sees them. He sees their needs, both spiritually and physically. He knows that they need food and they need rest. If they are going to be able to continue on their Mission they need time, space and rest. The Summer period is your time to take stock, to rest, to be 'fed'. And, while you find your deserted place, be assured that Jesus is shepherding those who are currently in your care and will teach them many things.

Please take a moment and in light of God's word and your experience this year, to reflect and share, if you wish, something that you are grateful for having received or been part of in our school community.

**PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL: Please respond to each petition: Renew your people, Lord.**

For the Church, that as it teaches, it might always be faithful to the vision of the Gospel entrusted to her by Jesus. We pray to the Lord...

For all those entrusted with the mission to educate in the light of faith, that they might find strength and support in their teaching communities. We pray to the Lord...

For persons whose hunger for knowledge and learning are constrained by war, violence or poverty, that they might find solidarity and hope in our response to their needs. We pray to the Lord...

In thanksgiving for those students and colleagues who have supported and inspired our Catholic vocation to teach. We pray to the Lord...

For the members of our educational community who may be suffering in hidden ways, that our prayers and compassion might support them in their struggles. We pray to the Lord...

In thanksgiving for colleagues, friends and students who will be moving on; that God continue to bless them in the new directions they have chosen. We pray to the Lord...

Please feel free to voice any additional intentions you may have.

Let us gather our prayers –those spoken and those remaining in the quiet of our hearts, and unite them with the prayer of Jesus, using the words he gave us:

Our Father...

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Lord, we give you thanks for calling us to serve this Catholic school community. By the power of your Holy Spirit, may the seeds of the Gospel you have planted in hearts and called us to water in our school continue to grow. Grant us a peaceful and restful summer, that we might be ready to respond with joy to your ongoing call to serve one another in Christ, in whom you make all things new. We make this prayer to you in his name. Amen And may almighty God bless us, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

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