THE PRINCIPAL’S ROLE IN SUPPORTING TEACHER INDUCTION

Then said a teacher, Speak to us of Teaching.

And he said:

No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge.
The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and his lovingness.
If he is indeed wise he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind.
The astronomer may speak to you of his understanding of space, but he cannot give you his understanding.
The musician may sing to you of the rhythm which is in all space, but he cannot give you the ear which arrests the rhythm, nor the voice that echoes it.
And he who is versed in the science of numbers can tell of the regions of weight and measure, but he cannot conduct you thither.
For the vision of one man lends not its wings to another man.
And even as each one of you stands alone in God’s knowledge, so must each one of you be alone in his knowledge of God an in his understanding of the earth.

Kahlil Gibran (1923)
The Prophet
Effective Induction Programs:
Guidelines for Principals of Provisionally Registered Teachers

It is important to begin your School Community’s relationship with a graduate teacher on a positive note. Some schools assume that graduate teachers have come out of university with all the skills and knowledge to ‘get on with the job’. While many graduate teachers may well be able to do just that, the school can make the settling in process a little less daunting by having procedures in place to welcome and introduce new teachers to their colleagues and to their new role. An induction process will help to ensure that the graduate teacher can more easily grasp the processes, procedures and aims of the teaching community, which will in turn boost their confidence and encourage them to become contributing members of the team.

Provisionally Registered Teachers (PRTs) bring to their first school employment enthusiasm, optimism, newness and knowledge of current educational theory which can act as inspiration for collegial partnerships which enrich and enhance the school environment.

The presence and involvement of the Principal and/or school leadership team in the school’s Induction program assures the graduate teacher that s/he is welcome, valued and will be supported. If there is no vision from the school of the ‘role’ the new teacher has within the school community, then s/he may be left confused and unsure of expectations. Since the Principal is the educational leader of the school, the person who establishes expectations and who may appraise the graduate teacher, then these teachers will be listening and watching to determine the Principal’s educational philosophy, goals and expectations. Another important item to remember is the Catholic Culture of the school. This should be a foremost feature of the induction program.

Catholic Education Office Ballarat (CEOB) offers a systemic scheme of induction which has been planned and implemented for all PRTs within Catholic Primary schools and Catholic Secondary schools in the Diocese. There is an expectation from the CEO and VIT that each school will also develop and implement its own induction program.

The induction program for PRTs is primarily the responsibility of the school, with the support of CEOB which can offer advice and where necessary, resources. Within the Secondary area, CEOB offers professional development days during the first year of teaching and on campus support for those teachers in their first, second and third years.

All graduate teachers want to succeed. They begin their teaching careers with enthusiasm and potential for success. However, pre-service education does not prepare new teachers to assume the same responsibilities as experienced teachers. Like newcomers to any profession graduate teachers need assistance and support throughout their first years in the role of teacher.
Part of effective induction programs are the attendance of Graduate / New Teachers at the CEOB Graduate / New Teacher Forum, and the cyclic training and retraining of mentors.

**IMPORTANT DATES for 2011:**

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<th>VIT Mentor Day 1 Training Days for 2011:</th>
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<td>February 15 (Tuesday) - Horsham</td>
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<td>February 24 (Thursday) - Warrnambool</td>
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<td>February 28 (Monday) - Ballarat</td>
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<td>March 8 (Tuesday) - Mildura</td>
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<td>March 10 (Thursday) - Swan Hill</td>
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It is recommended that all Mentors who have not trained within the previous three years attend whichever of these days fits best with school diaries. Registration is through the VIT website: www.vit.vic.edu.au

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**Secondary Graduate Teacher’s Forum 2011**

**Thursday March 17th & Friday March 18th**

Ballarat

Registration through the CEOB Events & PD website

www.ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au

*This event includes VIT briefing.

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**DEFINITIONS:**

*Graduate Teacher:* Are those teachers in their first three years after pre-service teacher education.

*Provisionally Registered Teacher:* Provisional registration is granted for a period of twelve months, but can be extended for a period up to a further twelve months. During this time, the teacher must provide evidence that they have achieved the standards of professional practice required for full registration. (VIT)

*Permission to Teach:* a person who is not a qualified teacher but who has appropriate skills and experience to teach in a particular subject or discipline and is required to instruct and/or assess a student’s participation in the school program. This person is eligible to be granted permission to teach.

*Induction:* A program that assists graduate teachers to identify strategies which enable them to carry out their duties in a school environment. It is also recognised that new teachers to Catholic Education and to the Diocese, will require a modified induction process.
INDUCTION:

In preparing induction programs, schools should consider such aspects as:

- a pre-appointment visit to the school
- a letter of welcome to accompany the letter of appointment
- providing a staff handbook of information about the school, its policies, its vision and mission, objectives and procedures, and the community it serves linked to a discussion on its key features
- pupil-free staff days in January should be utilised to initiate the graduate teacher into the school community, share the mission of the school and introduce them to their working environment
- the preparation of the first month’s current curriculum program, term planner or lesson register by an experienced teacher, as a model for future preparation and discussion
- the allocation of an experienced teacher as a mentor to work with each graduate teacher, this should be a flexible arrangement to allow for a change of mentor to meet the graduate teachers evolving needs
- the designation of a particular staff member (other than the principal) as a coordinator of induction in the school with an appropriate time allowance to be able to commit quality time to the induction process;
- involvement of graduate teachers in small group discussions as well as general staff meetings.
- the establishment of specific times for induction activities and time to spend with the mentor
- the need to avoid undue interruptions to the normal teaching program of the school by creating timetabled time for induction activities/reflection leading to application for full registration
- the preparation of the whole staff for the induction of graduate teachers so that they are sensitised to acknowledge and support the steep learning curve necessary in a busy school
- reduced teaching load for graduate teacher. This available time could be used to spend time with exemplary classroom practitioners to observe good practice or meet with specialist support staff
- shared duties with experienced staff to learn ‘duty of care’ obligations and become familiar with the ‘hidden curriculum’.

ROLE DESCRIPTIONS:

Consistent with recommendations in the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) supporting Provisionally Registered Teachers Manual, the following role descriptions are endorsed:

Role of Graduate Teacher

- A teaching load appropriate to a graduate teacher from within the teaching area(s) for which the graduate teacher was prepared and which does not include excessively large classes or classes known to present special difficulties (where possible, a graduate teacher would be given a reduced teaching load and/or additional release time). The Award states: Teachers in their First Year of Experience
  - 5.6.1 In primary schools may be allocated a maximum of 21.5 hours of scheduled class time per week averaged over a term.
  - 5.6.2 In secondary schools may be allocated a maximum of 18 hours per week of scheduled class time over a term (p. 110).
- Engagement in lesson preparation, discussions with teacher-mentor, and involvement in school or college induction activities, graduate teacher seminars and other in-service professional development programs.
Role of Mentor Teacher:

- Provision of advice and assistance to the graduate teacher as needed or requested on the planning, teaching and evaluation of instruction.
- Provision of advice and information regarding the gaining of full registration with VIT
- Introduction to and discussion about the Victorian Teaching Standards (VIT); the Victorian Teaching Code of Ethics and the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct.
- Providing other professional support to the graduate teacher, e.g.
  - coaching
  - demonstrations
  - recommendations on courses, workshops or conferences to improve the graduate teacher’s knowledge and skills
  - introduction to professional associations
  - acculturation into the school or college and its community
  - orientation to the resources, policies and procedures of the school, region and system
- Observing and critiquing the graduate teacher’s performance, and providing feedback or formative assessment that is confidential to the graduate teacher and the mentor.
- Acting as confidant, counselor and advocate for the graduate teacher.
- Holding regular discussions/conferences with the graduate teacher.
- Involvement in graduate teacher seminars where appropriate.

Role of Principal / Leadership Team:

- Leading the production of school induction processes and documentation
- Appointing willing and proficient Mentors to all new teachers and ensure that they undertake Mentor professional learning (VIT)
- Oversee induction processes and provide opportunities for ongoing evaluation
- Ensure that induction processes are followed and continue throughout the year
- Ensure that an annual evaluation of induction processes and experiences occurs and that necessary updates to processes and documentation are in place for the start of each school year
- Ensure rigour of VIT registration processes
- Lead whole staff induction support in an explicit manner

Role of All Staff: (display PRT Support Flyer / Poster forwarded to all schools)

- Encourage, support and share knowledge and resources with new and graduate teachers
- Ensure graduate/new teacher feels welcome in staff room, school and social activities
- Seek to provide information before there is an urgent need eg Reporting information not the week before it occurs
- Be available to the graduate/new teacher, especially on occasions when mentors may be absent or unavailable
ACCREDITATION:

Accreditation to teach Religion in Catholic Schools will be granted to registered teachers who have successfully completed an approved course in Religious Education studies. This study is a course approved by the appropriate authority qualifying a teacher to teach religion and/or about religion, or to educate in faith or make a positive contribution to the aims and objectives of Catholic Education in the Diocese.

To gain accreditation, Primary or Secondary school teachers must have successfully completed an approved formal course and its assessment. This course should include a foundational unit in the Church’s history and teaching and units in Biblical Studies, Sacramental theology and Religious Education method and practice. The course must be approved by the agreement of the Diocesan Directors of Catholic Education.

An applicant for Accreditation to teach Religious Education in a Catholic School must provide satisfactory evidence of practical experience of the teaching of Religious Education in a classroom setting.

Accreditation to teach in a Catholic school will be granted to registered teachers who:

- are able to demonstrate that they have engaged in **fifty (50) hours** of religious study.

- These studies should include an adequate coverage of each of these areas:
  - (a) Child, adolescent and adult faith development (**a minimum of 10 hours**)
  - (b) The aims, objectives and rationale of Catholic schools (**a minimum of 10 hours**)
  - (c) Revelation, the Catholic Church, Jesus Christ, Scripture, the Church in its Liturgy, Life and Tradition, Sacraments, Morality, Justice and Peace (**a minimum of 15 hours**)

- These studies may be undertaken in:
  - (a) School-based in-service activities
  - (b) Diocesan and regional seminars
  - (c) Formal courses

SUPPORT AVAILABLE FROM CEOB:

- Off site professional learning for graduate teachers – Graduate Teacher Forum in March, 2011

- On site visits from Education Officers in all areas of curriculum – including Religious Education, as requested.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

How much release time do I have to give a graduate teacher?

Graduate teachers in their first year of teaching are required to have additional release time to assist them in their planning. This release time may be given on a weekly basis, but may also be accumulated to allow for extra planning or professional learning time. Teachers in their first year of teaching

- 5.6.1 In primary schools may be allocated a maximum of 21.5 hours of scheduled class time per week averaged over a term.
- 5.6.2 In secondary schools may be allocated a maximum of 18 hours per week of scheduled class time over a term (p. 110).

Is there funding available to support the graduate teacher?

Funding to support graduate teachers is separated out in the Primary school setting and made available specifically for graduate teachers programs from CEOB.

In the Secondary environment the funding is within the school’s overall budget.

This funding may be used to provide additional release time for graduate to meet with mentor. It may be used to ensure graduate participates in professional learning activities.

How often should the graduate teacher meet with his/her mentor?

There should be formal meeting times planned as well as the incidental meetings. Mentors should meet with the graduate teacher at least weekly in the first term – this may lessen during subsequent terms. These meetings should be well planned and not just ‘times for a chat’. If it is possible for the school to plan release times for these teachers to occur at the same time this would be an advantage to the working relationship. If it is possible to give a mentor additional release time this would also ensure less stress for the mentor.

Does the school have to have an induction program?

Yes – every school should have an induction program. This should be not only for graduate teachers but for any staff member new to the school. However, an induction program for the graduate teacher is vital for his/her confidence and capability in the classroom.

Does the school have to have a mentor for the graduate teacher?

Yes – each graduate teacher needs a mentor. This mentor should be carefully chosen and participate in the VIT mentor development program.

When do I know that I need to get external support for a graduate teacher?

The mentor should report to you as Principal. If at any time the mentor believes that the graduate teacher is finding an area of teaching, organisation or management difficult then you should be informed so that
you can offer further assistance. This can be from other staff members, but it may also be from CEOB personnel. The first step is an accurate identification of the problem’s source.

*What are my responsibilities as school Principal in implementing and evaluating the induction program?*

As the leading teacher and person responsible for the school it is your responsibility to ensure that you

- ensure that there is an effective induction program
- make appropriate teaching assignments for graduate teachers
- provide adequate teaching resources
- communicate expectations for teaching and learning in the school
- interact with graduate teachers individually and in small groups
- observe classroom teaching
- provide feedback and affirmation to the graduate teacher
- monitor and evaluate the induction program with the leadership team to ensure it is relevant and contains current educational thinking.

The majority of new teachers to our colleges are able to integrate very successfully into college programs and environments, however graduate teachers especially will appreciate efforts made to assist the process.

CEOB personnel are available to support the Principal, teachers and graduate / new teachers in the schools during induction.