Oide

Tacú leis an bhFoghlaim Ghairmiúil i measc Ceannairí Scoile agus Múinteoirí

Supporting the Professional Learning of School Leaders and Teachers

JCSP Initiative Booklet 2026/2027

CC BY NC

Please read: Important Information

- The JCSP initiative application process is now open, and schools are invited to submit initiative proposals through the JCSP website under the round 02/26. Please focus on and improve targets from the school's School Self Evaluation (SSE) Plan or DEIS Plan in the proposals.
- **The closing date for Initiative Applications is 12 noon, Monday 5th October 2026.**
- Outstanding initiatives from previous rounds should be evaluated by *5pm Friday 25th of September*. Initiatives must be completed, evaluated and all funds spent in order to qualify for 2026/27 Initiative funding. Where this is not possible, please email jcspresources@oide.ie with details of the initiative/s that are to be carried over to the current round. Carried over initiatives reduces the number of initiatives a school can apply for in the next round as the maximum number of initiatives a school may have is 6 + Christmas Celebration.
- Each initiative carries its own funding. A fully completed initiative proposal in respect of every initiative (including Christmas Celebration) should be submitted. Incomplete proposals will not be considered.
- In relation to initiatives that carry high monetary value, preference will be given to schools who have not received these initiatives within the last 2 years. You may wish to consider alternative applications.
- Following receipt of a Reading Corner, you may apply for a Reading Corner top up. Thereafter there should be a break of 3 years before applying for this initiative.
- Application is made through the JCSP website after login. There are instructions on how to log in and how to apply for an initiative on the coordinators tab of the website together with instructional videos, link: http://www.jcsp.ie/co-ordinators.html
- Funds are granted subject to overall budget availability and may be amended. Following adjudication, schools will receive notification of initiatives approved and funds granted.
- Completed initiatives should be evaluated by Tuesday 4th of May 2027.

JCSP Initiatives 2026-2027 Overview

Schools are offered a broad range of initiatives each year which support student outcomes and experiences. Initiatives offer schools opportunities to implement or develop various interventions into the formal and non-formal curriculum. These interventions can link with schools' SSE/DEIS Targets.

In previous years, initiatives have proved hugely successful and have led to significant developments within the programme.

As a result of participating schools' evaluations and recommendations, the wider network of JCSP schools have benefited greatly from the experience and insights gathered and shared.

Initiative funding is provided for the **organisation** of educational activities rather than capital expenditure, unless specified by the OIDE JCSP.

We are offering initiatives under the following categories:

1) Literacy
2) Reading
3) Numeracy
4) Subject Specific
5) STEAM
6) Digital Technology
7) Key Skills of Junior Cycle
8) Wellbeing
9) General JCSP

1) Literacy Initiatives – pages 8-12

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B) Book Review

C) Digital Device

D) Digital Portfolio

E) Digital Storytelling

F) JCSP Newsletter / Yearbook

G) Reading Corners/ Top Up

H) Storytelling

I) WRaPParound

2) Reading Initiatives – page 12-15

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B) Drop Everything and Read Top Up

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D) Paired Reading Top Up

E) Readalong

F) Readalong Top Up

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H) Reading Challenge Top Up

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English

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B) Drama

C) WRaPParound

Gaeilge:

D) An Ghaeltacht

E) Bodhrán/Traditional Instrument / Top Up

F) Dance

G) Gaeilge Digital Technology in the Classroom

H) Maidin Gaeilge

I) Seanachaí

Subject/Curricular area:

J) Geography

K) History

L) Home Economics

M) Home Economics: Celebrity Chef

N) Music

Modern Foreign Languages:

O) Linguascope

P) Modern Foreign Language

Physical Education:

Q) Dance (incl Ceili)

R) Physical Education

S) Subject Topic Boxes

5) Digital Technology Initiatives – pages 22-24

A) Digital Device

B) Digital Portfolio

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D) Digital Technology in the Classroom

E) Film Making

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6) STEAM Initiatives – pages 25-28

A) Artist in the Classroom

B) Creativity (formerly Arts in Junior Cycle)

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D) Drama

E) Engineering

F) Graphics

G) Junior Cycle Coding in Action

H) Maths Games

I) Paired Maths

J) Science

K) Trip to an Art Gallery

L) Wood Technology

7) Key Skills of Junior Cycle Initiatives – pages 28-31

A) Being Creative

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C) Being Numerate

D) Communicating

E) Managing Information and Thinking

F) Managing Myself

G) Staying well

H) Working with others

8) Wellbeing Initiatives – pages 32-34

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B) Being Aware

C) Being Respected

D) Being Resilient

E) Being Responsible

F) Staying Connected

9) General – page 34-35

A) Christmas Celebration

B) Field Trip

C) Guidance

D) Study Skills

E) Make a Book

Specific Literacy and Numeracy Interventions

1) Literacy Initiatives

A) Author in Residence:

This programme particularly focuses on creative writing skills development where an author would work for a period of time with a group of JCSP students. Schools could link with Poetry Ireland “Writers in Schools Residencies Scheme” by phoning the Writers in Schools team at Ph: 01-6789022. Webpage: https://www.poetryireland.ie/education/writers-in-schools

This scheme is based on the idea of a short residency by a writer to a school, working closely with one teacher and with the same JCSP class or group of students. Many projects have a strong local flavour in that the writer is local.

The thinking behind these residencies is to take a more developmental approach towards the teaching of literature and to develop approaches which enable the participants to explore the world of imagination over a longer period, in the company of an experienced writer. The participation of a key teacher and the development of a working alliance between the teacher and writer are fundamental to this approach.

B) Book Review:

Schools can either bring students on a trip to a book shop to purchase books or order books online that they will read, discuss and record their book reviews in their Reading Journal booklets which can be ordered from the JCSP online ordering site as part of this initiative.

C) Digital Device:

This initiative allows a teacher to purchase handheld gaming devices/ tablets and accompanying software/apps to support literacy/numeracy development. The teacher is asked to explore and choose the most suitable handheld device/ tablets

available on the market and then choose the most suitable software/ apps. The teacher is invited to buy a set of devices and use them with their JCSP students. They are required as part of the initiative to evaluate the impact of the activity as well as the software/app chosen.

D) Digital Portfolio:

This initiative is provided in order to develop students' digital literacy and self- assessment skills. The digital portfolio can be used to record, store and showcase student work which can be accessed by parents, students and teachers. It can also facilitate the development of students' literacy skills through blogging and the use of digital tools. The subvention will be provided in order to provide JCSP students with access to a digital portfolio for one year.

A free online course for teachers is available on https://www.oidetechnologyineducation.ie/onlinecourses/introducing-digital-portfolios-2/. Teacher resources are available here: https://www.oidetechnologyineducation.ie/?s=Digital+Portfolio+post+primary. Good practice videos are available at this link: https://www.oidetechnologyineducation.ie/videos/?school-level=post-primary&video-category=teaching-learning&teaching-learning=digital-portfolios&video-language=

E) Digital Storytelling:

Everyone has a story to tell. Digital storytelling enables students to create multimedia resources using images, voice, text and music which can be shared with peers and the wider community. It can give students a wider audience for their stories as they can be shared via email, website, blogs, pod- casts and social media. There are many free tools available for creating digital stories. Digital storytelling can play an important role in group work and collaborative learning within the classroom. Digital storytelling supports student under- standing of subject area knowledge, as well as

planning, writing, technical, presentation and research skills. Students' higher order thinking, social language, reflection and artistic skills are positively affected when creating digital stories in the classroom, while students will also learn how to be safer and more responsible digital publishers as they learn about copyright, citing sources and the responsible use of personal information and images.

F) JCSP Newsletter/Yearbook:

The JCSP year is always an exciting and eventful one and what better way to capture all the activities and achievements than in a newsletter or yearbook. The subvention for this initiative will provide coordinators with funds to produce such a newsletter or yearbook. The aim would be to produce a newsletter a couple of times throughout the year or a yearbook towards the end of the year providing JCSP students with a forum to display their great work to the broader school community.

J) Reading Corner/ Reading Corner Top Up:

Reading is an essential component of all subject areas so why not make it a visible component as well. To instil in students an awareness of the importance of reading, classrooms can provide an environment in which reading is clearly valued. This initiative can be used to create a classroom reading corner with shelves that have books on a variety of topics, targeting a range of reading levels and provide a wide range of genres, both fiction and non-fiction, including such reference books as dictionaries, thesauruses and encyclopaedias, etc. Beanbags could also be a feature of the classroom-reading corner.

A top up application can be made in the year following the grant of the full Reading Corners initiative. Thereafter there should be a break of 3 years before applying for this initiative.

H) Storytelling:

Sharing and creating a common experience in storytelling aids in the development of oral language patterns and listening skills. Students need a wide experience with spoken language if they are to achieve success in reading.

This initiative provides funding to engage an outside storyteller to introduce the JCSP students to the art of storytelling. This initiative could also be part of a wider project involving students in creating and telling their own stories.

I) WRaPParound Initiative:

WRaPParound—Writing, Reading and Performance Poetry

The funding provided will allow schools to engage a poet/rap artist for WRaPParound workshops with their students. Participating students in each schoolwork with an established poet/rapper over a series of workshops during which they write, edit, recite and/or record their own work.

Set up in 2013, WRaPParound is a JCSP Library Project performance poetry initiative run in conjunction with Poetry Ireland. Each year participating schools have been invited to showcase their work at performance events in Trinity College, Dublin and University College, Cork.

This spoken-word poetry initiative introduces students to writing, reading and reciting poetry in a new way. Through being encouraged to craft poems on their own ideas and experiences, students find a new way into poetry.

Writing, listening to and creating spoken word poetry and rap songs gives students an understanding of the power of language. The ability to write their own poems, to stand up and perform their poems or to rap quickly and clearly contributes to the development of writing, oral language and listening skills. Experience to date has demonstrated that participation in this spoken word poetry education

initiative can strengthen students' literacy skills, can engage reluctant writers and can develop the student voice and emotional literacy.

2) Reading Initiatives

Schools engaging with these reading initiatives are encouraged to sign up for the FREE JCSP Digital Library at this link https://jcsplibraries.com/jcsp-digital-library/. This digital library is open to all JCSP schools and contains a wide range of books suitable for teenagers and young adults. Class sets of some titles are also available.

A) Drop Everything and Read (DEAR):

This is a great way of promoting reading across the whole school or year group. The idea is that at a set time every day for a week (or longer if possible) everyone stops what they are doing and reads for fifteen minutes. It is a shared experience, gets people talking about books and reading while conveying a strong message that the school believes in reading. Students read, principals read, teachers in the staffroom read, phones are taken off the hook and secretaries read, the caretaker reads and visitors to the school are offered books or magazines to look through. This initiative can be used to organise boxes of books, magazines and newspapers per class, as well as one for the staffroom and office.

B) Drop Everything and Read Top Up:

Schools that participated in and completed the "Drop Everything and Read" initiative last year can apply for this supplementary top up fund. This initiative aims to support the re-running of this initiative once again this academic year. It also supports schools to acquire additional reading materials for the initiative.

C) Paired Reading:

Paired Reading is a short team reading intervention. A tutor supports student reading. Paired Reading runs three to four times a week for six weeks. A Paired Reading Initiative can work where JCSP students act as tutors to a primary school

class, or senior cycle students are reading tutors for a JCSP class or parents work as tutors with JCSP students. Students are awarded for successfully taking part in this reading project. The following support materials can be provided to schools:

- Paired Reading Teacher's Manual
- Paired Reading Tutor guidelines
- Reading Pairs A3 posters
- Tutor training DVD "Everybody Reads" series available from the JCSP Office
- Paired Reading student achievement certificate

D) Paired Reading Top Up:

Paired Reading top up offers schools funding to purchase more books for their paired reading project which is already up and running but needs to be restocked.

E) Readalong:

Readalong is a short-term reading intervention where students read while listening to the book being read. Students can also review the books and track their reading. After completing a six- week Readalong programme, students are awarded for their achievement. Please note that the JCSP Digital Library currently stocks over 180 professionally narrated readalong eBooks.

F) Readalong Top Up:

Readalong top up offers schools funding to purchase additional audio books for their Readalong project that is already up and running but needs to be restocked.

G) Reading Challenge:

Reading Challenge is a short-term reading intervention, developed by a JCSP Coordinator. Students are challenged to read a piece of reading material for six weeks. Parental involvement is an element of this intervention. Reading Challenge motivates students to read and review books and other types of reading material; they also track their

reading and are awarded for successfully meeting the reading challenge. The following support materials can be provided to schools:

- "Reading Challenge" teacher guidelines
- "Reading Challenge" booklet—Student book review
- "Reading Challenge" student achievement certificate
- "Reading Challenge" wall posters (A3)

H) Reading Challenge Top Up:

Reading Challenge top up offers schools funding to purchase more books for a new reading challenge project which is already up and running but needs to be re-stocked.

I) "Who Wants to be a Word Millionaire?":

This is a short-term reading intervention which challenges a class group of JCSP students to engage in recreational reading, at home with the support of their parents, and to collectively read a total of one million words over a six-week period. Teacher guidelines and, "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" achievement certificates are available to order.

J) "Who Wants to be a Word Millionaire?" Top Up:

Schools that participated in and completed the "Who Wants to be a Word Millionaire?" initiative last year, can apply for this supplementary top up funding to support the running of the initiative again during the current school year and to enable schools to acquire additional reading materials for the initiative.

K) The Reading Medley:

Schools applying for this initiative must identify the three reading initiatives (from the suite of JCSP reading initiatives) and ***name them in the proposal form.***

The Reading Medley is a reading initiative for all JCSP students. It is built on the best practice emerging from schools. Many schools are already running a number of

reading initiatives with a year group and so this initiative asks that you put together a medley of existing JCSP reading initiatives to form a full first year reading programme. It is envisaged that at least one JCSP reading initiative is implemented with the chosen group each term.

In order to ensure sustained interest in reading, enhanced funding is available for this initiative to support the purchase of age-appropriate reading materials. This may supplement your JCSP Reading Corner if you have one or help to put one in place if you do not have one yet.

3) Numeracy Initiatives

Numeracy as defined by Department of Education (Literacy and Numeracy Interim Report) encompasses the ability to use mathematical understanding and skills to solve problems and to meet the demands of day-to-day living in complex social settings. It means being able to: estimate, predict and calculate; identify patterns, trends and relationships; gather, interpret and represent data; express ideas mathematically; engage in problem solving, using investigation and reasoning skills; use digital technology to develop numeracy skills and understanding.

The following suite of numeracy initiatives are aimed at improving students' numeracy skills.

A) Digital Device:

This initiative allows a teacher to purchase handheld gaming devices/ tablets and accompanying software/apps to support literacy/ numeracy development. The teacher is asked to explore and choose the most suitable handheld device/ tablets available on the market and then choose the most suitable software/ apps. The teacher is invited to buy a set of devices and use them with their JCSP students.

They are required as part of the initiative to evaluate the impact of the activity as well as the software/app chosen.

B) Number Millionaire:

Number Millionaire is a numeracy quiz where individual students (contestants) are challenged to identify the correct answer to twelve arithmetical questions. Each quiz question has a choice of four answers; three of the answers are incorrect. The student tries to identify the correct answer by performing mental computation and/or deduction.

Whenever a student is unsure of the correct answer, he / she can avail of the support provided by the four Lifelines (50:50, Ask a Friend, use a Friend, Ask the Audience) to arrive at the correct answer. The quiz is usually planned and structured as an individualised activity, involving one contestant at a time, but can also be implemented as a paired or collaborative activity involving two or more students.

C) School-based Numeracy:

This JCSP numeracy Initiative enables schools to acquire age-appropriate experiential resources and games in mathematics and numeracy and to use these materials to develop creative approaches to the teaching of mathematics and numeracy to JCSP students. encompasses the ability to use mathematical understanding and skills to solve problems and to meet the demands of day-to- day living in complex social settings. It means being able to:

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- identify patterns, trends and relationships.
- gather, interpret and represent data.
- express ideas mathematically
- engage in problem solving, using investigation and reasoning skills.
- use digital technology to develop numeracy skills and understanding.

Reference: Ireland's Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy 2024-2033: https://oide.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Irelands-Literacy-Numeracy-and-Digital-Literacy-Strategy-2024-2033-Every-Learner-from-Birth-to-Young-Adulthood.pdf

4) Subject Specific Initiatives

English Initiatives:

A) Digital Technology in the Classroom:

This initiative aims to enhance the digital skills of JCSP students to become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens. It is hoped that teachers will link with the school's Digital Learning plans, targets and actions, which will guide them in developing this initiative specific to the needs of the students. Instructional videos on the use of digital tools to enhance teaching and learning for all are available on the Oide Technology in Education website: https://www.oidetechnologyineducation.ie/videos/

B) Drama:

This initiative aims to promote the area of drama. Schools look to local or regional drama groups who offer workshops to schools in areas such as performance, improvisation, mime, clowning and movement

C) WRaPParound:

WRaPParound—Writing, Reading and Performance Poetry

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Experience to date has demonstrated that participation in this spoken word poetry education initiative can strengthen students' literacy skills, can engage reluctant writers and can develop the student voice and emotional literacy.

Gaeilge Initiatives:

D) An Ghaeltacht:

The funding can be used to enable JCSP students to visit a Gaeltacht region.

E) Bodhrán/Traditional Instrument/Top Up:

The aim of the initiative is to introduce JCSP students to the bodhrán/traditional instrument and to playing along to Irish music. Schools can buy a number of bodhráns/ traditional instruments and arrange for group lessons locally. Your local branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí can supply the names of local teachers. Bodhráns are available from music shops around the country.

F) Dance:

This initiative aims to promote the area of dance. Schools look to local or regional dance groups who offer workshops to schools in areas such as performance, improvisation, mime, clowning, dance and movement. Teachers may also use this to organise a Céilí to promote engagement with the Gaeilge statements.

G) Gaeilge Digital Technology in the Classroom:

This initiative aims to enhance the digital skills of JCSP students to become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens. It is hoped that teachers will link with the school's Digital Learning plans, targets and actions, which will guide them in developing this initiative specific to the needs of the students.

Instructional videos on the use of digital tools to enhance teaching and learning for all are available on the Oide Technology in Education website: https://www.oidetechnologyineducation.ie/videos/

H) Maidin Gaeilge:

The funding will be available for schools to host an Irish morning where students can experience all kinds of activities that encourage the use of the language.

Schools could have a shopping simulation of a village street/shopping centre with a bakery, a shop, a restaurant etc. In preparation for the morning, a cross- curricular project could be organised involving a number of subjects such as Art, Home Economics, Maths, Geography, History and, of course, Gaeilge.

I) Seanachaí:

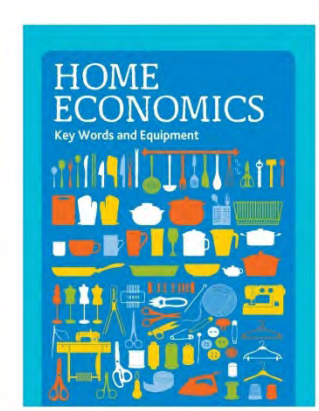
Bilingual storytelling with an outside storyteller/seanachaí who will introduce the art of storytelling and engage with the students to develop their own stories.

J) Geography:

This initiative will provide students the opportunity to engage in active teaching and learning to support the Junior Cycle Geography specification. Students are afforded opportunities to complete geography statements in conjunction with this initiative.

K) History:

This initiative will provide opportunities for schools to develop creative strategies or develop resources around the teaching of History. Students are afforded opportunities to complete History statements in conjunction with this initiative.



L) Home Economics:

This initiative will provide students the opportunity to engage in active teaching and learning to support the Junior Cycle Home Economics specification. Students are afforded opportunities to undertake relevant subject statements in this area and to link with a range of cross-curricular statements also.

M) Home Economics Celebrity Chef:

The funding for this initiative will provide schools with an opportunity to link with a local “Celebrity Chef”. This initiative will introduce an imaginative and innovative dimension to cooking for JCSP students.

N) Music:

This initiative aims to promote the area of music. Schools look to local or regional. music groups who offer workshops to schools in areas such as performance and improvisation.

Modern Foreign Languages Initiative:

O) Linguascope:

A grant can be made to subscribe to the website linguascope and to purchase and use many of their exciting resources for use with the JCSP students.

P) Modern Foreign Language:

This initiative supports activities that encourage the use of the target language. For example: a shopping simulation with a bakery, a shop, a restaurant, etc. A cross-curricular project involving the Art, Home Economics, Maths, Geography, History and Modern Foreign Language departments among others to be involved in preparing for the simulation of a morning in a European high street/village.

Physical Education Initiatives:

Q) Dance:

This initiative aims to promote the area of dance. Schools look to local or regional dance groups who offer workshops to schools in areas such as performance, improvisation, mime, clowning, dance and movement. Teachers may also use this to organise a Céilí to promote engagement with the Gaeilge statements.

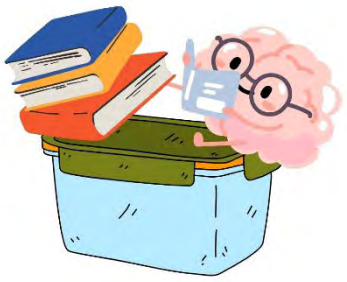
R) Physical Education:

This initiative is to support schools in engaging with strand 3 of the Physical Education specification. Strand 3: Individual and team challenges.

This strand focuses on building students' competence and confidence in two of the following physical activity areas: orienteering and team challenges, aquatics and athletics. Students are encouraged to set challenging goals for themselves individually and/or as part of a team and to reflect on the experience and progress made. In this strand, schools may choose an adventure activity other than orienteering if their location facilitates this choice.

S) Subject Topic Boxes:

With this initiative schools have the opportunity to source and purchase topic books (excluding Textbooks) and resources related to their individual subject areas. This will be relevant to all subjects e.g., Materials Technology Wood/Wood Technology, Home Economics, History, Geography, Religion, etc.



5) Digital Technology

A) Digital Device:

This initiative allows a teacher to purchase handheld gaming devices/ tablets and accompanying software/apps to support literacy/numeracy development. The teacher is asked to explore and choose the most suitable handheld device/ tablets available on the market and then choose the most suitable software/ apps. The teacher is invited to buy a set of devices and use them with their JCSP students. They are required as part of the initiative to evaluate the impact of the activity as well as the software/app chosen.

B) Digital Portfolio:

This initiative is provided in order to develop students' digital literacy and self-assessment skills. The digital portfolio can be used to record, store and showcase student work which can be accessed by parents, students and teachers. It can also facilitate the development of students' literacy skills through blogging and the use of digital tools. The subvention will be provided in order to provide JCSP students with access to a digital portfolio for one year.

A free online course for teachers is available on https://www.oidetechnologyineducation.ie/onlinecourses/introducing-digital-portfolios-2/. Teacher resources are available here: https://www.oidetechnologyineducation.ie/?s=Digital+Portfolio+post+primary .

Good practice videos are available at this link: https://www.oidetechnologyineducation.ie/videos/?school-level=post-primary&video-category=teaching-learning&teaching-learning=digital-portfolios&video-language=

C) Digital Storytelling:

Everyone has a story to tell. Digital storytelling enables students to create multimedia resources using images, voice, text and music which can be shared with peers and the wider community. It can give students a wider audience for their stories as they can be shared via email, website, blogs, podcasts and social media. There are many

free tools available for creating digital stories. Digital storytelling can play an important role in group work and collaborative learning within the classroom. Digital storytelling supports student understanding of subject area knowledge, as well as planning, writing, technical, presentation and research skills. Students' higher order thinking, social language, reflection and artistic skills are positively affected when creating digital stories in the classroom, while students will also learn how to be safer and more responsible digital publishers as they learn about copyright, citing sources and the responsible use of personal information and images.

D) Digital Technology in the Classroom:

This initiative aims to enhance the digital skills of JCSP students to become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens. It is hoped that teachers will link with the school's Digital Learning plans, targets and actions, which will guide them in developing this initiative specific to the needs of the students. Instructional videos on the use of digital tools to enhance teaching and learning for all are available on the Oide Technology in Education website: https://www.oidetechnologyineducation.ie/videos/

E) Film Making:

This exciting JCSP initiative is in place to invite schools to explore the area of digital film making with the JCSP students. It is hoped that schools will source local expertise in this area and students will be taught some of the techniques involved in filmmaking, perhaps linking with the video statement or an adaptation of it. Storyboarding and scriptwriting techniques could be explored in this initiative. Many arts groups around the country are involved with film and may provide you with a useful starting point.

F) Gaeilge Digital Technology in the Classroom:

This initiative aims to enhance the digital skills of JCSP students to become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens. It is hoped that teachers will link with the school's Digital Learning plans, targets and actions, which

will guide them in developing this initiative specific to the needs of the students. Instructional videos on the use of digital tools to enhance teaching and learning for all are available on the Oide Technology in Education website: https://www.oidetechnologyineducation.ie/videos/

G) Junior Cycle Coding in Action:

This initiative aims to support schools engaged with the Junior Cycle Coding short course. In line with the short course, this initiative can offer opportunities for schools to engage with coding and enhance the problem solving and critical thinking skills of students. Schools may consider using this initiative to purchase resources to support the teaching and learning of coding or to experiment with the development of programs, apps, and games.

6) STEAM Initiatives

This initiative recognises the potential for both cultural and science development through the intersection of STEM with the Arts. It provides for the development of transversal learning opportunities that both enhance and transcend subjects, supporting students transition to Senior Cycle and the development of lifelong learning capacities. This initiative offers school the opportunity to link an initiative across a number of subject areas which could include robotics, guest speakers and much more!

A) Artist in the Classroom:

This initiative is an exciting opportunity for students to become acquainted with an artist and to be exposed to the artistic process in action. Through this initiative, a visiting artist has the opportunity to model the artistic process and demonstrate the elements of this process, engaging with critical thinking skills, making informed decisions, reflecting, analysing and implementing ideas. This can be a valuable learning opportunity for students and has the potential to bring creativity to life, as well as demonstrating the realistic process of working through an art project. This initiative may incorporate the Junior Cycle key skills of “Working with Others”, “Being Creative” or “Managing Information and Thinking.”

B) Creativity (formerly Arts in Junior Cycle):

This initiative is to encourage the development of creativity approaches to learning in collaboration with diverse partners, artists, and creatives. The subvention provides schools with the opportunity to purchase a variety of engaging and stimulating materials to augment teaching and learning in a variety of subject areas. Resource links can be found here: http://www.creativity.oide.ie

C) Dance:

This initiative aims to promote the area of dance. Schools look to local or regional dance groups who offer workshops to schools in areas such as performance, improvisation, mime, clowning, dance and movement. Teachers may also use this to organise a Céilí to promote engagement with the Gaeilge statements.

D) Drama:

This initiative aims to promote the area of drama. Schools look to local or regional drama groups who offer workshops to schools in areas such as performance, improvisation, mime, clowning and movement.

E) Engineering:

This initiative will provide students the opportunity to engage in active teaching and learning around the teaching of Engineering. Students are afforded opportunities to undertake relevant subject statements in this area and to link with a range of cross-curricular statements also.

F) Graphics:

This initiative will provide students the opportunity to engage in active teaching and learning around the teaching of Graphics. Students are afforded opportunities to undertake relevant subject statements in this area and to link with a range of cross-curricular statements also.

G) Junior Cycle Coding in Action

This initiative aims to support schools engaged with the Junior Cycle Coding short course. In line with the short course, this initiative can offer opportunities for schools to engage with coding and enhance the problem solving and critical thinking skills of students. Schools may consider using this initiative to purchase resources to support the teaching and learning of coding or to experiment with the development of programs, apps, and games.

H) Maths Games:

This initiative provides opportunities for teachers to source and acquire age-appropriate maths games and/or maths activity packs and to use these resources to support the development of mathematical and numerical understanding among JCSP students. Teachers may also opt to plan, construct and develop their own maths games and activity packs.

I) Paired Maths:

This initiative provides opportunities for participating schools to plan and develop a framework for linking Fifth Year/Transition Year students with JCSP students in order to support the development and enhancement of mathematical and numerical competencies among JCSP students. Also, JCSP students can be paired with students from the primary school. The JCSP students will perform the role of peer tutors to the younger students. Certificates of participation for students are available in English and Irish.

J) Science:

This initiative focuses on the development of creative approaches to the teaching of Science to JCSP students in conjunction with JCSP science statements. Many innovative projects have been undertaken in schools due to participation in this initiative, e.g., Rocket Launch, Science Bus, Local Habitat study, etc.

K) Trip to an Art Gallery:

This initiative offers an opportunity for students to visit an art gallery. Through this visit, visual culture can be brought to life for the students. Exposure to art outside the classroom should broaden the horizons of students and allow them to harness their critical thinking skills through the exploration and analysis of techniques, themes and media used. This valuable learning experience may also provide a springboard for their own creativity, experimentation and artistic expression.

Teachers may also consider using this creative initiative to engage with a flipped-classroom, student-centred approach to learning. Schools may wish to engage with their local art gallery for this initiative. This initiative may incorporate the Junior Cycle key skills of “Working with Others” or “Being Creative.”.

L) Wood Technology:

This initiative will provide students the opportunity to engage in active teaching and learning around the teaching of Wood Technology Students are afforded opportunities to undertake relevant subject statements in this area and to link with a range of cross-curricular statements also.

7) Key Skills of Junior Cycle Initiatives

A) Being Creative:

“Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.” - Albert Einstein

This initiative aims to develop and harness the creativity of students. Schools undertaking this initiative may consider innovative ways to encourage students to learn creativity (potentially through the use of digital technology) and use their imagination to explore options and alternatives. This initiative also offers opportunities for schools to enable students to use their imagination to develop ideas.

Schools may consider film making, project work or creating digital stories for this initiative.

This document contains useful ideas that schools may consider engaging with for this initiative: https://ncca.ie/media/1148/beingcreative_april_2015.pdf

B) Being Literate:

“The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.” – Ludwig Wittgenstein

This initiative aims to promote the area of literacy. Schools can look to engage in an activity which promotes the literacy development of their students. These activities may involve reading for enjoyment with critical understanding, writing for various purposes and expressing ideas clearly and accurately. Remember literacy includes the capacity to read, understand and critically appreciate various forms of communication including spoken language, printed text, broadcast media and digital media. Some ideas for this initiative may include purchasing subscriptions to a newspaper or online newspaper, purchasing resources to promote literacy in the classroom, purchasing equipment to encourage students to give presentations at JCSP celebrations or holding a school public speaking event.

C) Being Numerate:

"We only think when confronted with a problem." - John Dewey

This initiative recognises the importance of being numerate in today's world. This initiative will provide opportunities for schools to develop creative ways to promote the necessary skills to become numerate. Numeracy involves the ability to distinguish between facts, using critical thinking and reasoning skills to process information and express ideas mathematically. With this in mind, schools may consider using this initiative to encourage students to gather and present information or use problem-solving skills on a project.

D) Communicating:

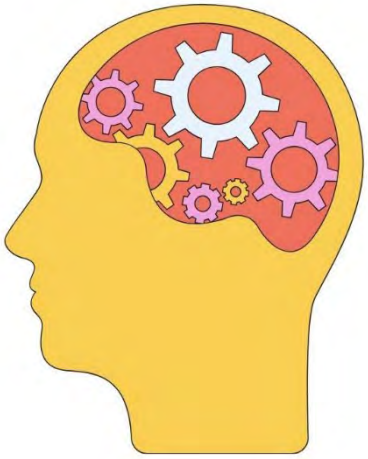
"When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen." - Ernest Hemingway

This initiative recognises the importance of developing the key skill of communication. This initiative offers opportunities for schools to develop creative strategies around the development of students' communication skills.

Some schools may wish to consider providing opportunities for students to engage in debates, performances or express themselves using digital technology.

This document provides further ideas:
https://ncca.ie/en/resources/communicating_april2015/

E) Managing Information and Thinking:



"It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it." - Aristotle

This initiative aims to encourage learners' curiosity and also gather, record, organise and evaluate information. Think creatively and critically. Reflect on and evaluate their learning. Use digital technology to access, manage and share knowledge.

The initiative could invite students to keep a learning journal or create a blog about themselves and their learning with some prompt questions guided by the teacher. This can help them to identify learning goals, record evidence of success and reflect on their learning needs. There are lots of nice journals available now which can help engage students in the reflection process. You may find some more ideas here: Managing-information-and-thinking_April-2015 | NCCA

F) Managing Myself:

"You cannot teach a person anything; you can only help him find it within

himself." – Galileo

This initiative aims to assist learners to understand themselves both as individuals and as learners so that they can develop personal goals and plans. It also helps students develop strategies to make considered decisions, to take action and to reflect on their progress. You may find some exciting ideas here which you can use with students to help them consider decisions, set, and achieve personal goals, be

able to reflect on their learning and use digital technology to manage themselves and their learning. Link https://ncca.ie/en/resources/managing-myself_april-2015/

G) Staying Well:

“Well-being is attained little by little, and nevertheless is no little thing Itself.” — Zeno of Citium

This initiative aims to benefit learners while recognising that learners’ overall wellbeing must be supported alongside their intellectual development. Being healthy, being socially active and being able to take care of yourself and of others helps students become happy and confident. This key skill also helps young people to be positive and engaged in their learning. You may engage with some of the strategies found here to support your students staying well in your school. We particularly like a Healthy Eating Policy, why not use this initiative to promote healthy eating in your school! Remember staying well includes being healthy, physical and active, being social, being safe, being positive about learning and being responsible, safe and ethical using digital technology. Link: https://ncca.ie/en/resources/staying_well_april2015/

H) Working with Others:

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." - Henry Ford

This initiative focuses on encouraging students to collaborate with a view to achieving shared goals. This initiative offers opportunities for students to work collectively, co-operate and respect difference. It also helps schools to develop strategies to enable students to engage constructively to overcome conflict and develop active listening skills. Schools engaging with this initiative may consider purchasing equipment to support undertaking project work, cooperative learning strategies (such as the Jigsaw strategy) or group debates. This document contains ideas for this initiative: https://ncca.ie/en/resources/workingwithothers_april2015/

8) Wellbeing Initiatives

A) Being Active:

This initiative provides opportunities for schools to purchase equipment that will support students in being physically active. Research suggests that student involvement with physical activity in school can reduce anxiety, improve social skills and also enhance their self-confidence.

Schools engaging with this initiative may consider purchasing sports equipment suitable for the needs of all students, introducing a new sport to your school, going to an outdoor activity centre or holding a sports day.

B) Being Aware:

This initiative recognises the importance of student awareness of their thoughts, values and being aware of themselves as learners. The funding provided for this initiative can be used to purchase resources that may encourage students to reflect on themselves as learners and recognise where they can improve, such as reflective journals. The funding may also be used to purchase books or films that may allow them to consider and reflect on their own values.

C) Being Respected:

This initiative offers opportunities for schools to promote respect and positive relationships between friends, peers and teachers. Students who feel valued, motivated and respected will be more likely to enjoy their learning and experiences of school. This initiative invites schools to purchase resources to support the integration of collaborative work, activities that require active listening skills (such as debates) or project work which can help to cultivate and nurture respect in the classroom.

D) Being Resilient:

This initiative is available to schools who wish to enhance the resilience of students. Being resilient involves students acknowledging that they can overcome challenges,

actively seek and accept assistance and know that they have the capabilities to achieve. Schools engaging with this initiative may consider purchasing resources relating to resilience, booking a guest speaker to speak about the topic of resilience or engaging students with a project that may be more challenging than previous projects undertaken.

E) Being Responsible:

This initiative focuses on developing student self-responsibility. This initiative offers opportunities for schools to assist students in making healthy eating choices, recognising where their safety or wellbeing may be at risk and taking actions to protect themselves and others. Some ideas for this initiative may include engaging students on a first aid course or a project related to climate change or the environment.

F) Staying Connected:

This initiative is designed to ensure that students feel connected to their school, their friends, community, and the wider world and understand how their actions and interactions impact on their own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts. Schools could identify local groups that the students could link with. Students, through brainstorming and discussion, would identify what kind of community service they would deem to be most valuable. Ideally, the activity would support, in some way, a group that is in their local community and the aim is to heighten awareness of the need to support others in our community, to practice the skills needed to offer practical support to such groups and to facilitate the students to give back to their local area. This initiative sets out a challenge to our students. All

too often they are more than willing to give a hand, to get involved with many students eager for the chance to be involved. They enjoy being with their friends and so together they are asked to reflect on what are the needs of their local community, to identify some aspect of the local area that could do with a hand. The teachers are asked to facilitate this reflection and support their plan of action. The programme runs for a number of weeks before they evaluate the results of their work, and it culminates with a JCSP celebration ceremony where all participants receive a certificate of participation. Those involved in groups such as Localise will receive an Active Citizenship Certificate. Such a programme is initially run over ten weeks and could act as a catalyst for further community work as groups may decide to continue working after the initial stage. Some schools may choose to link with The Localise Community Service-Learning Programme http://www.localise.ie that is a method of connecting classroom lessons with meaningful service to the community. The programme gives teachers and students a first-hand experience of learning through community service. It fits easily in a classroom setting and it enhances the teaching of JCSP, CSPE, SPHE, RE and Transition Year. For example, a group of first year secondary school pupils studying CSPE may visit and tidy their local elderly day care centre as part of their action project', or they may decide to fundraise and make gifts and cards for local hospitals and charities. The programme benefits the school, the community and the students.

9) General JCSP Initiatives

A) Christmas Celebration:

This particular initiative enables JCSP students, their parents and teachers to join in a celebration and recognise student work from the first term. Students from the three junior years are usually involved. Many schools put on displays of work by the students. This can be a selection of their work from the first term or a specific project i.e., Christmas. It can also be the culminating event of a cross- curricular project and /or a

display of student work where parents and teachers are invited to acknowledge and celebrate the students' achievements.

B) Field Trip:

Students are given the opportunity to go on a field trip that will enhance their ability to achieve learning outcomes in a broad range of subjects. Teachers can work in a collaborative way to engage in a field trip that can also help students to achieve cross curricular statements.

C) Guidance:

This initiative will give schools an opportunity to purchase appropriate software and support materials, or they could develop their own materials for teaching Guidance to JCSP students. Students are afforded an opportunity to complete a Career Guidance statement.

D) Study Skills:

With this initiative, schools could source suitable providers of materials or could develop their own materials on study skills.

E) Make a Book:

This initiative will give schools an opportunity to fund their attendance at the Make a Book exhibition. In granting this initiative, there is a commitment by the school to present at a Make a Book regional exhibition in the current school year. Example of students' work can be seen https://vimeo.com/1175520235?share=copy&fl=sv&fe=ci. Students are afforded an opportunity to complete a wide selection of statements including Cross Curricular statement no. 50 Make a Book.