

'Exploring Coding' - A collaborative CPD initiative

This collaborative initiative was designed to support schools and teachers in their inclusion of the new Junior Cycle short course in *Coding* within their Junior Cycle programme. The short course is available as an option for schools under the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015*.

A total of 22 schools were chosen from over 120 entries to participate, and their innovative work was supported by the Short Courses Team within the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) Support Service who linked with Lero – The Irish Software Research Centre – and Intel Ireland. As well as the tailored training and online support, Intel Ireland donated 900 Galileo Gen 2 Boards and teacher kits which can allow students engage in technology and design-related activities.

The initiative sought to:

- Examine the current provision and opportunities within schools for ICT-related curriculum components at Junior Cycle
- Capture the experiences of schools, and collate resources which can support their implementation of the short course in *Coding*
- Explore further options to support schools and teachers in their implementation of the short course in Coding

Findings were shared via an interim report (Sept 16) and a final report (May 2017)

During the year-long pilot, participating teachers:

- Participated in five CPD events to share current practice and explore the new short course. These included
 - an initial regional twilight event (Jan 16),
 - a one-day CPD event in the University of Limerick (Jan 16),
 - a one-day CPD event in the Intel Ireland Campus in Leixlip (Feb 16)
 - a school visit (Apr 16)
 - regional two-day CPD events (Oct 16)
 - regional one-day sharing of practice CPD event (Jan/Feb 17)
- Could access Online Sharing of Practice Webinars (Sept 16 – Jan 17)
- Contributed to an online community of participating teachers
- Shared their experiences with the JCT short courses team

The schools that participated in the 'Exploring Coding' initiative are listed below:

Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town, Co. Donegal*	Comeragh College, Carrick-On-Suir, Co. Tipperary
Adamstown Community College, Co Dublin	Confey Community College, Leixlip, Co Kildare
Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa, Clara, Co. Offaly	Crana College, Bunrana, Co. Donegal*
Ballinamore Community School, Co. Leitrim*	Glenart College, Arklow, Co Wicklow
Castleknock Community College, Dublin 15	Killorglin Community College, Co Kerry
Castletroy College, Co Limerick	Kishoge Community College, Lucan, Co. Dublin
Celbridge Community School, Co. Kildare	Nenagh Vocational School, Co Tipperary
Coláiste an Chraoibhin, Fermoy, Co Cork	St Brigids Vocational School, Loughrea, Co Galway
Coláiste Bhaile Chláir, Claregalway, Co. Galway	St Colman's Community College, Middleton, Co Cork
Colaiste Chiarain, Croom, Co. Limerick	St Nessian's Community College, Limerick
Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed, Thurles, Co. Tipperary	St Oliver Post Primary, Oldcastle, Co. Meath

*These three schools joined the project in May 2016

Further information on the initiative can be found at www.jct.ie or by contacting Michael Carey – JCT Team Leader, Short Courses at michael.carey@jct.ie

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