



Our Vision

Junior Cycle for Teachers exists to inspire, support and empower teachers in the implementation of Junior cycle Education

(JCT Development Strategy 2018-2021)

Updates

- 8,760 teachers attended our 2nd teaching subject workshops during September and October. We facilitated 421 workshops over 2 months.
- 45 Leadership workshops took place over the past 6 weeks for school leaders.
- Cluster day CPD is ongoing 2/3 days a week.
- Whole School CPD is ongoing and will be completed by March.

L1LPs/L2LPs

The Team provides a variety of CPD supports from a Whole School day to two-hour visits. Some of the presentations used in schools are accessible [here](#). Click on the play-button below to watch the L1LP webinar.



this issue

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Welcome to our first new look JCToday newsletter.

This is an e-newsletter and contains an abundance of helpful information and links that will bring you to key websites and documents pertinent to aspects of the reform of junior cycle.



Junior Cycle reform transcends practically every facet of school life, from teaching and learning to assessment and reporting, from curriculum planning to timetabling and from wellbeing guidelines to JCPA celebrations. JCT is a support service that is working hard to support schools in all of these areas and we are extremely humbled with the level of engagement by school leaders and teachers, and with the feedback we are receiving.

Six years into the reform process and I believe we are turning a corner. Change is embedding in schools and green shoots are surfacing in many areas of junior cycle. I want to commend schools for all the hard work that they are doing in the context of junior cycle reform, despite all of the other work related pressures that they must deal with.

2018 has been good to JCT and as we approach 2019 I am confident of a year that will bring new challenges, but also more success. The JCT team is a highly dedicated and committed group of individuals who place the learner at the heart of their work. We are lucky to have them on our team, and I know that schools will be enriched as a result of their work.

Happy Christmas to all of our readers!
Dr. Pádraig Kirk
Director

Thank You

JCT wishes to thank all of the schools and education centres that are hosting our Cluster CPD events up and down the country. Your hospitality and the quality of your facilities and resources are second to none.

The provision of CPD in authentic classroom settings enhances the delivery on the day and is really popular with teachers.

JCPA Awards

Heartiest congratulations to students who will receive their Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) award over the next two weeks. The students are the second group to receive the new award which has replaced the Junior Certificate.

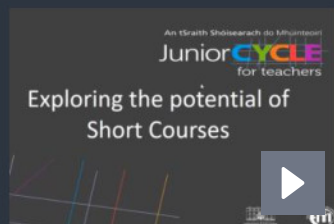


Students in CBS Thurles Secondary School receiving their JCPAs

Short Courses

The following links provide information about planning for short courses.

Click the play button below to view our recent Short Course Webinar.



Short Course Specifications

- CSPE
- PE
- SPHE
- Coding
- Digital Media Literacy
- Artistic Performance
- Chinese Language & Culture
- Philosophy

Workshops on the Philosophy Short Course will be available in 2019.

Short courses can also be developed by schools to suit the specific needs and interests of their students, but they must meet specific requirements as outlined in the 'Framework for Junior Cycle'.

Support, as well as guidelines and templates, are provided by the NCCA for schools who wish to develop their own short course. [Click here](#) for more information.



An Chomhairle
Mhúinteoireachta
The Teaching Council

An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí
Junior CYCLE
for teachers

"The Junior Cycle Framework acknowledges that if teachers are asked to facilitate students in reflecting on their learning, then teachers need to be supported in reflecting on their learning too."

Tomás Ó Ruairc, Director, Teaching Council

In his book *"Fall down 7 times, Get up 8"*, Naoki Higashida says:

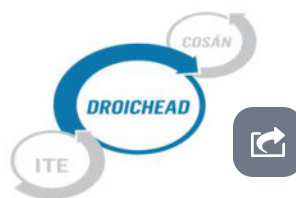
... what if freedom is not a matter of leaving things behind, but of bringing inside what is out. By opening up the door of the heart, we take a step towards the world.

Although it probably wasn't his intention, Higashida was touching on the core meaning of education – to lead forth from within. Somebody of course must do the leading – education is about people helping people to learn.

As a profession, teachers receive the wider world into their classrooms every single day – with all its complexity and diversity of humanity. Much of our work in the Teaching Council seeks to create more space and time for the people who are at the heart of teaching and learning, which is why cultures of collaborative professionalism, as espoused by Andy Hargreaves, are so important.

Such collaboration is authentic, relevant and impactful.

We know from research conducted by the ESRI that Droichead, the integrated professional induction framework for teachers, has made a significant contribution to growing these cultures.



Almost 1,000 schools have received Professional Support Team training to date.

This training, and the process of Droichead itself, can be a great support for teachers as they seek to engage with the new Junior Cycle.

They can help teachers make the most of their individual and collective sense of agency, so they can bring teaching and learning alive for all learners – themselves included. We were all learners once – in school – and we are all learners now.

Writing in 2015, Louise Hayward said:

What we know now about assessment leads to changes not only in the ways that we help young people to learn but also to the ways in which teachers, researchers and policy makers learn.

It should come as little surprise to us then when people get so animated in discussing education. It's because it matters so much to everybody – teachers, parents, students, families and wider society.

The Junior Cycle Framework acknowledges that if teachers are asked to facilitate students in reflecting on their learning, then teachers need to be supported in reflecting on their learning too.

As part of the CROÍ Research Series (Collaboration and Research for Ongoing Innovation), the Teaching Council has a number of resources available online, including webinars and e-zines, which can support conversations and reflection around teaching and learning.

On 16 January 2019, we will co-host a webinar on reflection with JCT. The John Coolahan Research Support Framework offers funding for teachers to share and engage with existing research.

Reflective practice is central to all of our work as a Teaching Council.

In our Strategic Plan, we identify the three R's of teachers' professionalism as research, reflective practice and relationships. From initial teacher education through to Droichead (induction for NQTs) to Cosán, the national framework for teachers' learning, the Council is seeking to support teachers in having more space and time to find learning that is of relevance and interest to them and which aligns with the needs of students in their care.



We see it every year at FÉILTE – the Festival of Education in Learning and Teaching Excellence – and we hope to see more of it at that event in the years to come.



In this context, Junior Cycle reform is an ideal space in which to fully leverage the innovation many teachers have been leading for some time.

You may well be asking – what exactly do we mean by reflective practice? We have some resources on our website to help you explore this. But, for the purposes of this article, reflective practice can be described as what happens when we stop and think. There is a lot more to it than that – there are two core concepts in the term i.e., reflection AND practice. But a good starting point is simply stopping – if only for a few moments – and thinking about our professional practice. The process of reflective practice that Higashida was talking about - it brings inside what is out, which helps us embrace and shape the wider world. Junior Cycle reform says this is essential for students' learning. As a Teaching Council, we hold that teachers deserve no less.

Tomás O'Ruairc
December 2018

Professional Learning experience of JCT Advisors

JCToday recently spoke with two advisors of the newly formed Technologies team about their experiences working with the JCT support service. Both Declan Regan and John Forrest agreed that the chance to be at the cutting edge of CPD design and facilitation was their primary reason for joining JCT. The days are long with deadlines to be met, but the collaborative ethos embedded in the organisation allows for a “very engaging and hugely rewarding experience”. The days on the road working with colleagues from other schools allows you to experience the “honesty and clarity” required for JC reform.

The experience of facilitating Cluster days are a “great way to allow teachers in your subject area to focus on activities and discuss the challenges and requirements of embedding new subject specifications in their schools”. Both Declan and John also agreed that the feedback provided by teachers following these days is of huge benefit, both in terms of enhancing CPD design and improving facilitation.



Declan Regan



John Forrest

Webinars

JCT regularly use Webinars to explore aspects of the Junior Cycle. The main feature of live webinars is interactivity, or the ability to discuss, send and receive information in real time. Some of our upcoming Webinars are listed below.

Science:
Wed. 27th March, 2019.

Gaeilge (T2)
Thursday 28th March, 2019.

Engineering:
Monday 1st April, 2019.
(8.15pm – 7.15pm)

Wood Technology:
Monday 1st April, 2019
(7.30pm – 8.30pm)

Mathematics:
Tuesday 2nd April, 2019.
(6.15pm – 7.15pm)

Geography:
Tuesday 2nd April, 2019.
(7.30pm – 8.30pm)

History:
Wednesday 3rd April, 2019.

L1LP/L2LP
Thursday 4th April, 2019.

Applied Technology:
Monday 8th April, 2019.
(6.15pm – 7.15pm)

Wellbeing:
Monday 8th April, 2019.
(7.30pm – 8.30pm)

CSPE:
Tuesday 9th April, 2019.
(6.15pm – 7.15pm)

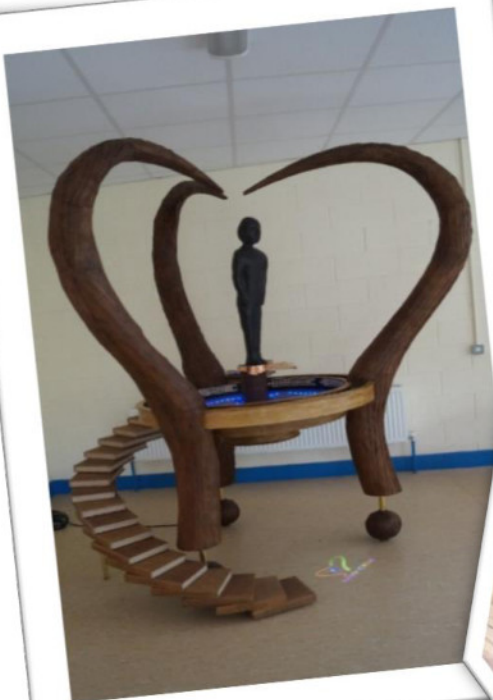
Music:
Tuesday 9th April, 2019.
(6.15pm – 7.15pm)

MFL:
Wednesday 10th April, 2019.

Home Economics:
Wednesday 10th April, 2019.

Junior Cycle Artefact

Wood Technology teacher Paul Butler, encapsulates the essence of Junior Cycle reform with his exploratory artefact on display at Nenagh CBS secondary school. This project took two years to complete and attempts to externalise the Principles, Key Skills and Statements of Learning while ensuring the student is at the centre of the teaching and learning.



Summary of Junior Cycle Artefact

From every angle you can see the heart shape that arches over the student symbolising that the student is at the heart of this new approach. The composition of the 3 question marks which forms the heart, symbolises the 3 years of the Junior Cycle. This represents the enquiry based approach to learning in the New Junior Cycle.

The 24 books that make the stairwell leading to the student denote the 24 Statements of Learning in the new Junior Cycle. These will assist the child in gaining a more holistic education.

The 8 principles underpin the new Junior Cycle framework document and are linked to each other as symbolised by the jigsaw pieces.

This piece of bog oak is over 5,000 years old but has been reborn and carved into a student. The student is reborn through partaking in the new Junior Cycle.

Science teachers

A sample Science final assessment paper is now available on the SECs website, and can be accessed [here](#). The final Assessment Guidelines are now available on the NCCA website and can be directly accessed [here](#)



Business Studies teachers

A sample Business Studies final examination paper is now available on the SECs website and can be accessed [here](#). The guidelines for completing the Business Studies Assessment Task can be accessed [here](#).

Upcoming Webinars

Philosophy:

Thursday 11th April, 2019.

Gaeilge: (T1):

Thursday 12th April, 2019.

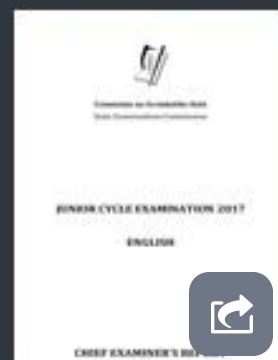
All webinars are recorded and made available on the subject page. www.jct.ie

Arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with particular reference to school year 2018/2019. Click on image to view. CL79/2018



English: Junior Cycle Examination 2017

Chief Examiners Report

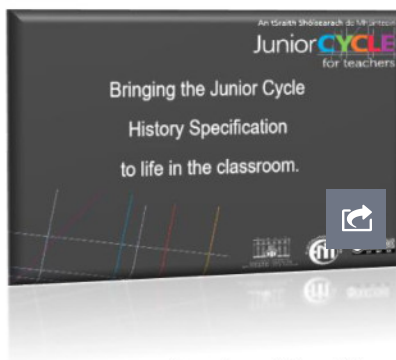
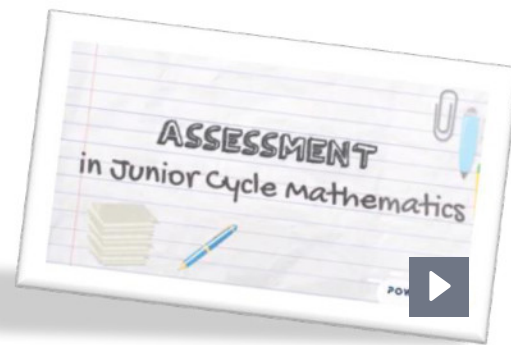


New Specifications from September 2018

The JCT subject teams continue to work with schools to provide CPD support and guidance. Phase 5 subjects were rolled out this year, including Maths, Home Economics, History, Music and Geography.

The **Mathematics Team** are currently facilitating CPD day 2018/19. This professional learning experience has been informed by feedback provided by teachers, and our Associate teachers, working in classrooms across the country. We look forward to meeting teachers on this day where we will look at how we achieve deeper learning through questioning. We explore how rich learning experiences can further develop the skills required for Classroom Based Assessments and provide opportunities for teachers to work and plan collaboratively. Tá ár gcuid acmhainní go léir ar fáil trí Ghaeilge freisin.

www.jct.ie/leanganaeilge/maths/maths_ga



The **History team** continues to engage with teachers through their 2018/19 workshop: Bringing the History Specification to Life in the Classroom, which focuses on teaching, learning and assessment in the History classroom. Last year over 3,000 History teachers participated in our Nature of History workshop. The History team also offered support on planning with the specification during their webinar in March, 2018.

The **Geography team** are facilitating a new professional learning experience that shows Geography teachers how to build in structured inquiries, formative questioning and feedback within their planning of units of learning, and considering potential opportunities that enable students to engage with field investigations. Based upon feedback from teachers on what their needs are, the team has created a number of valuable resources for teachers that are available on our [website](#). Our previous webinars can also be watched online.



The **Music team** were delighted to facilitate a two-hour workshop, entitled 'The Sound of our Learning Outcomes', with over 300 of our music colleagues at the Post-primary Music Teachers Association (PPMTA) Annual Conference in Limerick at the end of October. We have also put a short video of our learning together from the conference which can be accessed [here](#). Music teachers received their first CPD day in 2017/2018 which positioned our new specification in the context of the overall junior cycle reform. Based on your feedback, music

teachers are now engaging with professional learning experiences in 2018/2019 which explore effective planning and integration of assessment into the learning process.

The **Home Economics team** delivered it's first school cluster event in 2017/18. The focus this year is to strengthen collaboration and further develop our shared understanding of working with learning outcomes, along with identifying how we can support the incremental development of student learning.

In May, the NCCA published the Junior Cycle Home Economics - Guidelines for Classroom Based Assessment (First Edition) and as part of this year's cluster event we will engage with this document.



STE(A)M

WHAT IS STE(A)M?



IN JUNIOR CYCLE

SCIENCE | TECHNOLOGY | ENGINEERING | THE ARTS | MATHEMATICS



GEOGRAPHY



MATHEMATICS



HOME ECONOMICS



SCIENCE



As part of our elective CPD offerings we invite teachers to engage with the second year of our exciting STE(A)M in Junior Cycle initiative. STE(A)M is an acronym, which stands for: Science, Technology, Engineering, The Arts and Mathematics.

This elective CPD initiative seeks to provide Junior Cycle teachers with rich STE(A)M CPD experiences in keeping with national and international best standards. STE(A)M represents an interdisciplinary approach to societal challenges and innovation and is not bound within specific subjects. We are inviting all teachers with an interest in a STE(A)M agenda to attend these workshops. They will be of particular interest this year to teachers of Science, Geography, Home Economics and Mathematics. JCT is teaming up with several outreach education partners from the fields of STEM and the Arts to bring you our 2019 STE(A)M CPD programme.

To facilitate our planning for the delivery of STE(A)M CPD, it is essential that interested teachers register at the earliest opportunity. Registration is via our registration portal at www.jctregistration.ie. Your school has previously been supplied with relevant username and password details.

The deadline for registration is **Wednesday, 9th January 2019**. Our exclusive STE(A)M in Junior Cycle Twitter-handle is @JCTSteAm, while our main Twitter account, @JCforTeachers, will also publicise regular updates.

STE(A)M CPD CALENDAR 2019

Dates and venues January - April 2019

WORKSHOPS	12TH JAN	19TH JAN	26TH JAN	2ND FEB	9TH FEB	2ND MAR	9TH MAR	23RD MAR	30TH MAR	6TH APR
OCEANS	Galway Atlantic Quay, Salthill, Galway		Tayto Park, Ashbourne, Co. Westmeath	Athlone Education Centre	Wexford Education Centre	Dublin Zoo		Sligo Education Centre		Dingle Oceanworld Aquarium, Dingle, Co. Kerry
SYSTEMS	Limerick Education Centre		Carrick-on-Shannon Education Centre		Cork Education Centre		The Maldron Hotel, Sandy Road, Galway	Monaghan Education Centre	Donegal Education Centre	Dublin West Education Centre
WEARABLES		Rediscovery Centre, Ballymun, Dublin	Kilkenny Education Centre*		Kildare Education Centre*	Clare Education Centre*		Limerick Education Centre	Laois Education Centre*	Mayo Education Centre*
HUMANS		Waterford Teachers' Centre	Limerick Education Centre*	Science Gallery Dublin	Cúram Centre, NUI Galway	Athlone Education Centre*	Navan Education Centre			

* Half Day Workshop. All other workshops are full days 10am - 4pm.

HOW TO REGISTER (VIA JCTREGISTRATION.IE)

Registration is via the JCT Registration website at www.jctregistration.ie. Every school is provided with a password for registration. If you have any queries about registration or attendance at STE(A)M events, get in touch with us at: steam@jct.ie

Follow us on Twitter:
@JCTSteAm or @JCforTeachers

www.jct.ie

OCEANS

SYSTEMS

WEARABLES

HUMANS



Leadership

Autumn Leadership Professional Learning Experience 2018: Ongoing Reporting for Effective Teaching and Learning

The Junior Cycle for Teachers leadership workshop for Autumn 2018 is now complete and was a follow on from our highly successful Spring 2018 workshop. Forty five workshops took place at different education centres around the country. The structure of the workshop was to deepen the School Leader's understanding of effective practices in teaching, learning, assessment and reporting in *The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015)* and how to manage these changes on the ground in schools and lead all stakeholders in the community in valuing and implementing these new approaches.

On the day, school leaders explored the connectedness of the Guiding Principles for Reporting and their impact on effective teaching and learning in the classroom, examining how effective feedback supports student learning and the importance of student reflection in the learning process.

The new arrangements set out in *The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015)* outline that teachers will increasingly move away from a reliance on test results towards an approach which balances these results with greater consideration of how well a student is performing using a broader range of evidence.

Teachers will require support in deepening their understanding as to the rationale behind this change and then subsequently changing their practice to improve student learning.

Effective reporting needs to be sensitive to the self-esteem and general wellbeing of all students, while providing honest and constructive feedback. The workshops enabled participants to reflect on formative and judgemental feedback in reporting practices and the impact of both on students' self-esteem and motivation to learn.

Participants explored the new *NCCA* reporting templates designed for reporting at the end of second year and began to make decisions how they would use them in their own school context. The need to avoid 'over assessment' was a consideration for school leaders as students may be engaged in up to six Classroom-Based Assessments at the end of second-year in 2019.

A hugely valuable part of the day was how school leaders support staff to develop the types of professional conversations required to engage fully with learning outcomes as they are the bedrock of ongoing assessment and reporting through units of learning, classroom-based assessments, the assessment task and the State Examinations Commission exams.



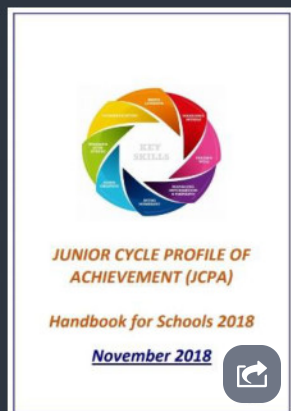
The workshops allow space for discussion with colleagues around effective ways of leading the process of teaching, learning, assessment and reporting in their schools and consider the long-term plan for its implementation. [Click here](#) for presentations, documents used during the day. The Leadership team are planning for the Spring 2019 Leadership learning experience and we encourage all school leaders to log on to www.jctregistration.ie and select one of the workshops in the New Year.

Quick link to your Subject Specifications

English	
Science	
Business Studies	
Visual Art	
Modern Foreign Languages	
Gaeilge (Irish-medium school) as Gaeilge	
as Bearla	
Gaeilge (English-medium school) as Gaeilge	
as Bearla	
Mathematics	
Music	
Geography	
History	
Home Economics	
Religious Education (available online shortly)	
Jewish Studies (available online shortly)	
Engineering	
Wood Technology	
Applied Technology	
Graphics (available online shortly)	
Civic, Social and Political Education	
Physical Education	
Social, Personal & Health Education	

Sample Examination papers available [here](#)

Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) Handbook for schools 2018



The purpose of this handbook is to support schools in their understanding of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA). It also provides details on how to complete the JCPA, including any changes that have occurred since JCPAs were first awarded in 2017, so that it can be awarded to students before the end of this calendar year.

JCPAs will be awarded to all students by schools commencing from Monday 10th December 2018. All JCPAs should be produced and awarded to students by the end of the Christmas term.

Updated versions of this document will be published on the Department's website www.education.ie.

Should you have any queries please email jcpa@education.gov.ie.

Management Resource Hours / JCT.ie

Over the past few weeks the Whole school team facilitated two webinars aimed at teachers allocated the JC management resource hours. We had over 340 attendees and the webinar is available at www.jct.ie. The following links will be of assistance for effective management resource hours planning for 2018/2019.

Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) Meetings Toolkit

Circular 0015/2017 (Arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle for 2017/18 and 2018/19)

Circular S90/2017 (Junior Cycle English Assessment Task)

Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) Handbook for Schools

Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCAD) Handbook for Special Schools. User Guide

JCT Registration (to register teachers for JCT Workshops and Short Courses)

Communicating with Parents



Members of the Whole School Team answering teachers questions at a recent webinar.

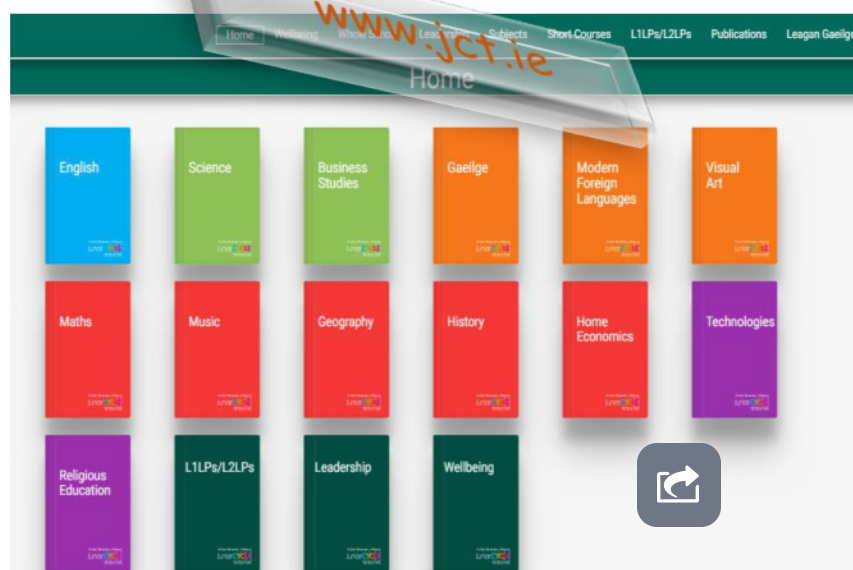
Circular 0029/2017 (Junior Cycle Professional Time)

Level 2 Learning Programmes (L2LPs) Guidelines

Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines

Framework for Junior Cycle 2015

Curriculum Online



The JCT website provides links to all essential Junior Cycle Information. Feedback is welcome as we continue our ground breaking work in schools and centres of education in 2018/19 and beyond. Keep up to date with regular announcements on jct.ie and our twitter feeds.

An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí
JuniorCYCLE
for teachers

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