## Getting Started with the Framework: 2012/2013

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#### First Steps

We set up a Junior Cycle Network Committee, 18 volunteered to join the committee with at least one person to represent each subject. The committee decided our school should work on the area of Key Skills, the first one that we would focus on would be "Working with Others". We had a whole staff morning at the end of last term with Denise Kelly, NCCA on this Key Skill and found it a most informative and useful day. I set up a separate discussion about that day titled "Key Skill Working with Others"

We decided as a school to try and incorporate this skill into our teaching this year. As I am in the Maths department I can only comment on what we have been doing. We have set up our classes into groups of 4 and we spent the first week working on problem solving type questions, giving students roles etc. We used the document "working with others" that can be found in the resources section. One maths teacher has already commented that he finds his class is working much better and are more engaged since working in groups.

As a staff we will be working in groups every Tuesday morning before school for the next 4 weeks (Croke Park hrs.). Also our staff meetings are one big circle. We are doing a lot of circle time in the school both as teachers and with students in class, this ties in with the philosophy of Restorative Practice which the school is practicing. So it works hand in hand with "working with others" key skill.

At the staff meeting I have encouraged everyone to join JC2.0- 33 have joined up so far though they shy to put up their pictures Also I encouraged them to share THEIR experiences of group work as I know our department is certainly not the only ones doing it. The history department have already been doing group projects with the students. It is all a learning curve for us, we hope to move onto incorporating the other key skills into our teaching throughout this year.

#### Second Stage

We are using our Croke Park hours for working on introducing the framework. Last Tuesday we all worked as groups in the library. We are working within our subjects to start off with, with options teachers working together and plan on doing this for the next few Tuesday mornings (8am). Last week we looked at the 24 statements of learning and how each was relevant to our department. We had already picked the key skill "working with others" to focus on for the start of this year. Every teacher picked an activity from the "Working with Others" key skill, for example "think/pair/share" or "jigsaw" (using the Working with Others Toolkit in resources). Teachers were encouraged to pick one class initially preferably 1st or 2nd years to try out the new activity and to hand out the student reflection sheets. Our next session we will reflect on what the students have commented. We aim to pick another activity for the following week. A lot of teachers are doing group work etc, it is now just getting students and teachers to reflect on it! So we plan to use the next few Tuesday sessions to do this. I have also set up an EDMODO group for teachers so we can share tips etc.

See attached the handouts that we worked on.

[Handout One: 24 statements of learning](../Handout124StatementsofLearning.docx)

Handout Two:

Handout Three: Student reflection sheet.

#### Stage three

By October we had dedicated 3 Croke Park hours to Junior Cycle Development. The first meeting was outlined in the discussion "Introducing the framework to teachers", the second meeting last week, I updated all the staff on the new framework - see attached presentation. I used the "briefing note" that was given to us at the assessment conference (this is available on the Department of Education website) and copy and pasted it into the slideshow.

In our 3rd session all teachers worked in department groups. We filled out teacher reflection sheets- this was reflecting on the activity that we had chosen to work on 2 weeks ago. Each department then had to list the new activities / part of key skill that had been used in the department "Subject Department Workspace", see attached this template as well as the completed one for the maths department.

* We are sharing our ideas on EDMODO, I have set up a "Junior Cycle" group on Edmodo for the teachers in our school. Every department was encouraged to post up at least one example of an activity they tried out and how that incorporated part of the key skill "Working with Others" or if it touched on any other key skill.
* We then used the jigsaw technique for the last 10 minutes of the hour. 2 members of each department group moved to another department to share with that department what they had been doing.
* We hope to continue this after mid term, again trying out new activities in class, reflecting, filling out a "subject department workspace", the hope would be to continually fill in such a sheet. We plan to incorporate all key skills as the months go on, then look at AFL after Christmas.